هكذا من الاصل

THE INDEPENDENT

Tuesday 30 December 1997 45p (IR50p) No 3,494

Inside the Maze and out, ministers keep on searching for solutions

Jail watch: A guard inside one of the watch towers at the Maze. Security is being reviewed at what is supposedly the United Kingdom's most secure penal institution Photograph: Pacemaker

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK

A visit to the Maze prison, in the tense wake of the assassination of loyalist Billy Wright inside its walls, is not without its ironies. "Smuggling prohibited" declares a large notice at the gate. "Warning – no firearms beyond this point" says another.

A few miles away three INLA prisoners accused of killing Wright with two smuggled firearms were being remanded in custody. When charged, one of them coolly told police: "Billy Wright was executed for one reason and for one reason only, and that was for directing and waging a campaign of terror against the nationalist people from his prison cell."

While the republicans were on the outside being charged, security minister Adam Ingram was inside the jail explaining why there would be no resignations of ministers or officials: "This is a very unique prison. It's unique in the whole of the democratic world. Nowhere is there such a concentration of dedicated paramilitaries and terrorists, and that does make a very unique situation."

Twenty miles away Wright's associates were busy organising for his funeral today. That too will be a unique occasion in that be thought a lot about death, partly because he had survived a number uf previous assassination attempts; and also, perhaps, because he had inflicted a fair amount of death himself.

He left behind detailed instructions for his own funeral. He wanted a member of the Rev Ian Paisley's Free Presbyterian church to officiate at the service, and another clergyman, a one-time loyalist prisoner who has since become a pastor, to give a graveside oration.

In the meantime, the security forces are hoping that members of the Loyalist Volunteer Force, the group which Wright founded and led, will not be planning further violent retaliation for his death. They now think Saturday night's LVF attack un a Catholic-frequented disco in Co Tyrone may have been an attempt to stage a massacre.

Three Catholic doormen outside the disco were shot and wounded, one of them fatally, while a 14-year-old boy was also hurt in the incident. Hundreds of teenagers were inside at the disco, but the LVF opened fire on the doormen instead of attempting to enter it to carry out what in Northern Ireland is known as a "spray-job".

The doorman who died, Seamus Dillon, was a former republican prisoner who had served a lengthy sentence for two IRA killings. Martin McGuinness of Sinn Fein said the doormen's "swift, unselfish and heroic" actions may have saved the lives of dozens of teenagers.

In the wake of the incident the police and army have stepped up patrols in a number of areas, paying particular attention to Catholic bars and hotels and other locations which might be targets for further LVF attacks. The situation in many areas is tense.

Back at the Maze, meanwhile, the minister's own car was subjected to a thorough search by paratruopers who looked in the boot and opened a suitcase before letting him through.

Media personnel who wished to question him were identified, searched and driven within the prison complex in a minihus with opaque windows. They were then delivered at a gate set in a perimeter wall which is 16ft high and which runs for two and a half miles. It is studded with occasional 30ft high watch-towers, its high points festooned with wires, cameras and searchlights. An escorted walk through a series of gates and four turnstiles fullowed, leading to a training room. In a corner, training manuals for a "custodial care vocational qualification" for prison officers laid out security rules. Element 2.1 dealt with "maintaining security during routine movement of prisoners within the establishment", which is what officers were doing with Billy Wright when he was gunned down.

Mr Ingram announced a new programme of regular and random searches in the prison together with a series of enquiries into the various incidents and the general running uf the jail. Asked whether the Government would accede to Unionist calls fur resignations he retorted: "Absolutely no. Resignations are not on the cards. In Northern Ireland local politicians can be long on comment but very short on solutions and answers."

Leading article, page 21

INSIDE TODAY

TODAY'S NEWS

House prices forecast to rise by 6% next year

House prices are expected to rise by 5 per cent next year, according to figures from the Halifax, the nation's largest lender. Other economic indicators for 1998 were contained in a survey showing that business failures were at a seven-year low, and an announcement by McDonald's that it is to create 5,000 new jobs. Page 22

Cannabis reporter held

An investigative reporter from the *Mirror* who was allegedly sold a quantity of cannabis by the son of a Cabinet minister has been arrested. The decision to detain Dawn Alford after she voluntarily attended a London police station was condemned by the paper's editor Piers Morgan as "an affront to investigative journalism". Page 3

Jet plunges 1,000 feet

A woman died and many passengers were injured when a United Airlines Jumbo hit huge turbulence over the Pacific and went into a 1,000ft plunge. Page 5

TODAY'S INDEPENDENT

This week there will be no *Eye*, nor the usual *Plus* sections. Television and radio are on the inside back of this section, the weather is on page 2, and the crosswords are on pages 18 and 30.

Web address: http://www.independent.co.uk

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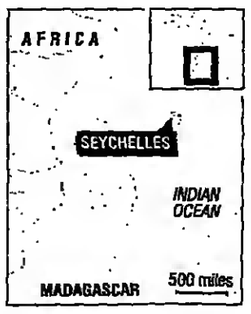
The Seychelles, a perfect break for a new puritan

Tony Blair quietly slipped away from his little local difficulties over cuts in benefits yesterday, and took his family to soak up the sunshine in the Marxist paradise of the Seychelles. *Jack O'Sullivan* and *Colin Brown* investigate prime ministerial holiday precedents.

Prime location: The idyllic beach on the Seychelles island where the Blairs are taking a break Photograph: Robert Harding



Labour prime ministers traditionally like to holiday close to home. To Harold Wilson, abroad meant work, so he opted for the austerity of a hungalow in the Scilly Isles. Clement Atlee visited Pembrokeshire, the Republic of Ireland when feeling adventurous. And Jim Callaghan generally preferred his Sussex farm.

But not Tony Blair who yesterday landed *en famille* in the Seychelles, a Bounty har paradise in the Indian Ocean.

Churchill, who liked to holiday in the Aegean with Aristotle Onassis, and with Lord Beaverbrook in France, would have sympathised. So would Ted Heath, who won the Sydney to Hobart ocean yacht race in 1969, months before becoming prime minister. And Anthony Eden – frustrated at missing his Malta holiday because of the Suez crisis – would have recognised Mr Blair's need to leave behind all that fuss about single parents and the disabled.

The Prime Minister arrived on the main island of Mahe with wife, mother-in-law and three children, flying on to a smaller island, *La Digue*. It is said to be like the Channel Island of Sark with sunshine – no cars, only hikes and ox-carts. There he can sunbathe on Anse Source D'Argent, the most photographed beach in the world, on an island which was the setting for *Goodbye Emmanuelle*, the soft-porn movie. He can expect temperatures of 30C, but he would be wise to carry an umbrella – the Prime Minister has picked the rainiest season for his holiday.

Discounted club class air fares for the family party would come to more than £13,000. This would reduce all but the best-off to eating coconuts for the week. But the Blairs will pay the full bill, while the taxpayer picks up the tab for the bodyguards and administration staff, known as the "garden girls".

There will be a few reminders of home on an island which was granted its independence under Labour's last prime minister, James Callaghan. Islanders are passionate, like Mr Blair, about the Queen Mother and her daughter, whose image still graces postage stamps. And Mahe has a *Little Ben* clock tower.

But the Prime Minister may be less comfortable with France-Albert Rene. President of the Seychelles, and owner of the Blairs' colonial-style plantation house. Mr Blair may wish to avoid an earbending from his landlord, a former Marxist, once backed by East Germany and North Korea, who glories in his hefty state spending on a highly successful health and education system.

Mrs Blair may feel at ease with the Catholicism of the islanders, missionised by the French, who arrived in 1756. There is, however, talk of voodoo surviving among the descendants of African slaves introduced by France.

For Mr Blair, this could hardly be worse than the two rebel Labour MEPs back home who have spent this week sticking pins into their leader.

2/BRIEFING

COLUMN ONE

Book quickly to secure your penthouse for the after-life

If you want to go to Heaven when you die, it might help to be interred above the sod rather than beneath it. Several storeys above ground might work best. Say a penthouse berth. Would that be mountain or ocean view, madam?

It will not be open until 1999, but work is about to begin on an unusual mausoleum outside Vancouver, western Canada. To be called the "Seasons Memorial Park", it will bring the burial business into the high-rise age.

Conceived by Alvin Mitchell, a local property developer, the edifice will stand five storeys high in a woodsy tract north of the city. From the outside it will look like a normal apartment building, with windows and gabled roof. Its occupants, however, will number 50,000. And they will all be dead.

The advantages of offering such accommodation to those who may eschew the more common cremation route, says Mr Mitchell, are various. Above all, it allows for a high concentration of tombs in a relatively small place. "A normal cemetery in Vancouver uses an acre to bury 1,000 people," he recently pointed out. "We'll have 50,000 interment spaces on 3.5 acres, so that's a considerably better use of the land."

Curbing cemetery-sprawl should be welcome in Vancouver which is on its way to becoming majority Asian. Chinese people in particular do not like living close to cemeteries. "They don't want to pass a cemetery on their way home," Mr Mitchell explained.

The building, which is costing Mr Mitchell some £20m, will consist mostly of long corridors with marble-faced walls covered with inscriptions identifying the tenants. On the top floor, there will be a small chapel and a reception area. And like the best Vegas hotels, the Seasons will offer themed floors – such as the veterans floor for the military.

Mr Mitchell expects to sell his accommodation slots quickly. He is hopeful that Chinese families will dig up ancestors' remains back home and bring them for reinterment at the Seasons. So if you are thinking about making a reservation, hurry. True, the atmosphere promises to be a touch morbid and the night-life non-existent. But there may not be space at this inn for very long.

— David Usborne, New York

PEOPLE

Heather Hallett: Wants better image for the Bar Photograph: Andrew Buurman

First woman leader of the Bar considers case for shake-up

Heather Hallett QC, the first woman chairman of the Bar Council, is considering plans for a Bar Ombudsman to help stamp out discrimination and harassment in the profession. Such a figure – probably a high-profile lawyer – would handle complaints against barristers' chambers and censure those found guilty of discrimination on the grounds of gender, age or race.

Ms Hallett, a deputy High Court judge, said such a move was "well worth considering" and she also backed an equal opportunities committee which would have responsibility for seeing that the profession was open to all sections of society. She said the council was already asking the Government for help with a loan system for law graduates to cover their Bar vocational course year, to ensure the Bar did not become a white, male "middle-class preserve".

A policeman's daughter, Ms Hallett, who went to state schools, added: "I hope that my election as chairman will prove that someone from a modest background and who is female can make it."

She conceded that the profession still has a bad public and media image. In her year of office she is promoting schemes for barristers to get involved in training in victim support schemes, and in visiting schools, so that the public could realise that members of the Bar did not have "two heads".

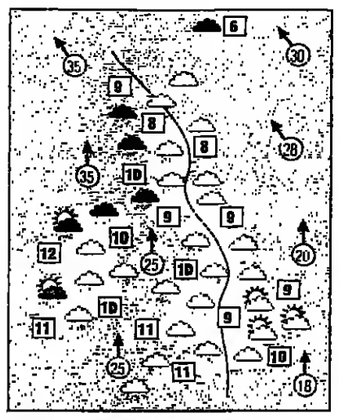
Ms Hallett has also announced a new task force which will examine how to control costs in high-profile criminal trials, which at present take up around £100m of legal aid a year. It will consider a new contract scheme in which barristers would work at a set rate, determined in advance.

However, Ms Hallett, an experienced criminal barrister, is unhappy with government attacks – led by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg – on so-called "fat cat" lawyers. Although the council was pushing for reform, Ms Hallett said that under the current proposals access to justice would be cut for the less well-off.

On the jury system, Ms Hallett said she personally wanted to see the age at which people sit on juries raised from 18 to 21.

— Michael Streeter, Legal Affairs Correspondent

FORECAST



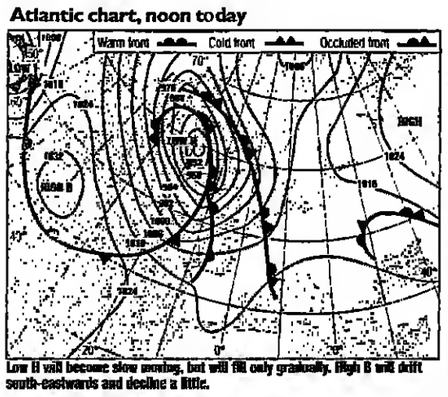
Noon today

Northern Ireland will have a windy day with outbreaks of rain, although it will brighten up later in the afternoon with sunshine and squally showers. Scotland will also become increasingly windy with rain spreading from the west, followed late on by brighter, more showery weather in the extreme west. The eastern half of England and Wales will be largely dry in the morning with just a little early drizzle, but outbreaks of rain will reach the west and extend eastwards in the afternoon.

Outlook for the next few days

New Year's Eve will be rather cold and windy with early rain in the extreme east of England clearing to leave all areas with sunny spells and showers. Most of the showers will be in the north and west, and over northern hills hail, sleet and snow are likely. On New Year's Day some more prolonged rain will spread from the west with gales in exposed areas. During the weekend the weather will stay very changeable with showers and some longer spells of rain.

Atlantic chart, noon today



Low H will become slow moving, but will fill only gradually. High B will drift south-eastwards and decline a little.

Air quality

Yesterday's readings	NO_2	SO_2
London	Moderate	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
C England	Moderate	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good
Outlook for today		
London	Good	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
C England	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good

British Isles weather Yesterday's figures at noon local time
C cloudy, Cl clear, F fair, Fg fog, Hz haze, M mist, R rain, S sunny, Sl sleet, Sh showers, Sn snow, Th thunder

Aberdeen	C	2	36	Bristol	C	7	45	Guernsey	R	6	48
Anglesey	R	7	45	Cardiff	C	7	45	Inverness	C	3	37
Ayr	Dr	3	37	Carlisle	M	2	36	Ipswich	C	7	45
Belfast	C	6	43	Dover	C	5	36	I of Scilly	Dr	11	52
Birmingham	C	6	43	Dublin	R	8	46	Jersey	C	7	45
Blackpool	C	6	43	Edinburgh	C	1	34	Liverpool	C	6	43
Bournemouth	C	10	50	Exeter	R	10	50	London	C	8	46
Brighton	C	9	48	Glasgow	C	0	32	Manchester	C	6	43
Newcastle	Fg	1	34								
Oxford	Fg	4	39								
Plymouth	R	10	50								
Scarborough	C	3	37								
Southampton	C	7	45								
Southend	C	8	46								
Stornoway	C	3	37								
York	C	1	34								

High tides

	AM	HT	PM	HT
London	01 53	7.1	14 15	7.1
Liverpool	11 26	9.5	23 48	9.3
Avonmouth	07 24	12.3	13 45	13.5
Hull (Albert Dock)	06 31	6.4	18 46	6.7
Greenock	00 32	3.2	13 03	3.5
Dun Laoghaire	11 38	4.1		[illegible]

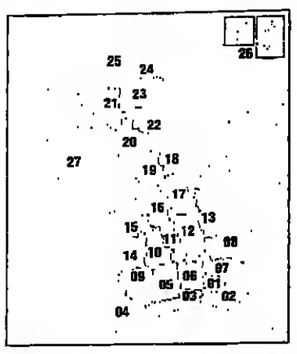
Height measured in metres

Lighting-up times

Belfast	16 06	to	08 4h
Birmingham	16 02	to	08 18
Bristol	16 10	to	08 16
Glasgow	15 51	to	08 43
London	16 00	to	08 06
Manchester	15 58	to	08 [illegible]
Newcastle	15 47	to	08 31

Sun & moon

Sun rises	8.06	Sun sets	16.00
Moon rises	8.15	Moon sets	17.[illegible]



INDEPENDENT Weatherline
For the latest forecast call **0891 5009** followed by the two digits for your area indicated by the above map.
Calls charged at 49p per min at all times (inc VAT)

Out and about with AA Roadwatch
Call **0336 401777** for the latest local and national traffic news. Calls charged at 49p per min at all times (inc VAT)

World weather Yesterday's figures at noon local time

Akrotiri	F	15	59	Chicago	[illegible]			Lima	[illegible]		
Alexandria	F	18	64	Christchurch	[illegible]			Lisbon	[illegible]		
Algiers	C	15	59	Cologne	[illegible]			Locarno	[illegible]		
Alicante	C	15	59	Copenhagen	[illegible]			Los Angeles	[illegible]		
Amsterdam	F	8	46	Corfu	[illegible]			Luxembourg	[illegible]		
Anchorage	Sn	-5	23	Dakar	[illegible]			Madrid	[illegible]		
Athens	F	14	57	Darwin	[illegible]			Majorca	[illegible]		
Auckland	F	19	66	Dhahran	[illegible]			Malaga	[illegible]		
Bahrain	[illegible]			Faro	[illegible]			Malta	[illegible]		
Bangkok	[illegible]	32	91	Florence	[illegible]			Manila	[illegible]		
Barbados	[illegible]	28	84	Frankfurt	[illegible]			Mecca	[illegible]		
Barcelona	[illegible]	13	55	Funchal	[illegible]			Melbourne	[illegible]		
Beirut	[illegible]	14	[illegible]	Geneva	[illegible]			Mexico City	[illegible]		
Belgrade	C	5	41	Gibraltar	[illegible]			Miami	[illegible]		
Berlin	R	3	37	Harare	n/a			Milan	[illegible]		
Bermuda	Sh	10	[illegible]	Helsinki	[illegible]			Mombasa	[illegible]		
Biarritz	[illegible]	15	59	Hong Kong	[illegible]			Montreal	[illegible]		
Bogota	F	21	70	Honolulu	[illegible]			Moscow	[illegible]		
Bombay	F	30	86	Islamabad	n/a			Munich	[illegible]		
Bordeaux	F	11	52	Istanbul	[illegible]	10	50	Nairobi	[illegible]		
Brisbane	C	25	79	Jakarta	[illegible]	31	88	Naples	[illegible]		
Brussels	D	5	41	Jeddah	[illegible]			Nassau	[illegible]		
Bucharest	R	4	39	Jerusalem	[illegible]			New Delhi	[illegible]		
Budapest	F	6	43	Johnny	[illegible]			New Orleans	[illegible]		
Buenos Aires	[illegible]	26	79	Karachi	[illegible]			New York	[illegible]		
Cairo	[illegible]	20	68	Kathmandu	[illegible]			Nice	[illegible]		
Calgary	[illegible]	6	43	Kiev	[illegible]			Nicosia	[illegible]		
Cape Town	S	20	68	Kingston	[illegible]	30	86	Oslo	[illegible]		
Caracas	F	30	86	Kuala Lumpur	[illegible]			Paris	[illegible]		
Casablanca	C	15	59	Las Palmas	[illegible]			Peking	[illegible]		
Perth	[illegible]										
Port Stanley	[illegible]										
Prague	[illegible]										
Reykjavik	[illegible]										
Rhodes	[illegible]										
Rio de Jan	[illegible]										
Riyadh	[illegible]										
Rome	[illegible]										
Salzburg	[illegible]										
San Fran	[illegible]	14	57								
Santiago	[illegible]										
Seoul	[illegible]										
Singapore	[illegible]										
Stockholm	[illegible]										
Strasbourg	[illegible]										
Sydney	[illegible]										
T'aipei	[illegible]										
Tel Aviv	[illegible]										
Tenerife	[illegible]										
Tokyo	[illegible]										
Toronto	[illegible]										
Tunis	[illegible]										
Valencia	[illegible]										
Vancouver	[illegible]										
Addis	[illegible]										
Vienna	[illegible]										
Warsaw	[illegible]										
Washington	[illegible]										
Wellington	[illegible]										
Zurich	[illegible]										

CONTENTS

TOURIST RATES

Australia (dollars)	2.46	Italy (lira)	2,845
Austria (schillings)	20.28	Japan (yen)	215.62
Belgium (francs)	59.62	Malta (lira)	0.63
Canada ($)	2.35	Netherlands (guilders)	3.25
Cyprus (pounds)	0.84	Norway (kroner)	11.94
Denmark (kroner)	11.06	Portugal (escudos)	293.63
France (francs)	9.65	Spain (pesetas)	243.69
Germany (marks)	2.89	Sweden (kroner)	12.73
Greece (drachmei)	458.83	Switzerland (francs)	2.34
Hong Kong ($)	12.59	Turkey (lira)	331,267
Ireland (punts)	1.12	USA ($)	1.64

Source: Thomas Cook. Rates for indication purposes only

7.30 FOR 8

by Chris Priestley

ZITS

by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

هكذا من الاصل

Spy on your neighbours by hiring your own satellite

Your neighbours could be watching you – via a spy satellite which will take detailed pictures to order over the Internet. Meanwhile, Big Brother can track you by your mobile phone. Is this progress welcome? *Charles Arthur*, Science Editor, explains that whether you like it or not, it's here.

Within the next few days, Internet users will be able to order photographs showing their house and its environs to a resolution of 10ft, using pictures taken to order from an orbiting satellite – just the ticket for those arguing boundary disputes.

Meanwhile, though you may not be aware of it, the security services could be tracking your movements around the country by the signals emitted from your mobile phone while it is turned on – even if you are not using it for a call.

The arrival of the personalised spy in the sky comes through an American company called Earthwatch, based in Longmont, Colorado. Its *Earlybird-1* satellite was launched from Russia and just before Christmas was successfully put into orbit, 295 miles above Earth, roughly the same height as the *Mir* space station. It orbits about once an hour, adding pictures to a vast database that the company is building up to create a "digital globe".

Earlybird can take pictures in which each frame covers an area of 3.5 square miles (9 sq km), and each pixel, or grain, in the picture is 10ft (3m) in size. By taking closely-matched pairs of frames, three-dimensional pictures can be built up. That, though, will be superseded late in 1998, when Earthwatch is launching its *Quickbird-1* satellite. It will be able to distinguish objects 3ft across – detailed enough to see a children's paddling pool or a gate.

Spy satellites in the past had similar capabilities: despite the tales, a satellite could never read the headlines in a newspaper in Red Square. But this technology has only recently been declassified by the US military – giving American industries a huge headstart in the commercial imaging market.

"Ours is the highest-resolution satellite imagery available from a commercial source. The people of the world will soon have easy and inexpensive access to the most refined representation of our planet ever assembled," said Donovan Hicks, head of Earthwatch. "This launch also shows what can be accomplished when we pool our global technological resources, and is a vivid reminder that the Cold War is over."

Not entirely: the pictures are available to anyone, including governments – except those of Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya and North Korea. (Notably, China is not now among the excluded list.) But pictures of those countries will be added to the company database.

The resolution available brings satellite imagery into the hands of anyone prepared to pay at least £200, with the images costing about £1.80 per sq ft. If the company has not already taken a picture of the required area, you can order it yourself and – cloud cover permitting – it will be taken on the next suitable orbit.

Combined with details from mobile phones, this could allow Big Brother to know what you are doing, and trace you, throughout the day. British mobile phone companies have revealed that when required to by court order, they will allow the law enforcement agencies access to their computer data.

This means that someone whose phone is switched on can be tracked around the country, because the phone emits a signal to keep in touch with its nearest "base station" every 30 minutes. That can also provide evidence, which can be used in court, of a person's whereabouts in criminal cases. The "cell" covered by a base station can vary in size: in a city it would be a few hundred metres.

For those who have their phones constantly switched on – as terrorists or criminals are assumed to – it is akin to having a homing device in your pocket.

Dancing dame: Preston Clare as the Widow Simone in rehearsal with the Scottish Ballet, whose production of *La Fille Mal Gardée*, using costumes and sets loaned free by Birmingham Royal Ballet, opened last night at the Theatre Royal in Glasgow Photograph: Colin McPherson

Journalist arrested over drugs bought in 'sting'

The police are usually grateful to journalists who expose crime. They are less keen when the crime is selling cannabis and it is a Cabinet minister's son who is exposed. *Paul McConn*, Media Correspondent, on a crime that dare not speak a name.

The Metropolitan Police has taken the highly unusual step of arresting the journalist who alleges she bought cannabis from a Cabinet minister's 17-year-old son. *Dawn Alford, a reporter on the Mirror*, was arrested on suspicion of possessing a controlled substance after she went voluntarily to Vauxhall police station in south London yesterday. Ms Alford was arrested but not charged and released on police bail.

It is usual in newspaper "sting" operations for the police to ignore journalists' temporary possession of drugs when they are exposing a crime. However, a police source said yesterday that in this case, because they had not been informed in advance of the "sting", and because the journalist held on to the drugs for over a week, the case had been muddied.

By charging the journalist the Met also hopes to wash its hands of the case and let the Crown Prosecution Service decide whether to proceed against either the minister's son or the journalist.

Ms Alford was unavailable for comment yesterday, but has told friends that she feared she has been followed since the story broke on Christmas Eve.

Piers Morgan, editor of the *Mirror*, said last night: "This is an outrageous decision which is, in my opinion, specifically designed to deflect attention from the criminal activities of a Cabinet minister's son to the entirely justifiable methods deployed by a newspaper to uncover them," he said.

"Police have not to my knowledge ever questioned this procedure in the past ... and we will today be appealing directly to the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, to immediately launch an inquiry into how this farcical situation arose."

Despite the 1933 Children and Young Person's Act which forbids the identification of anyone under 18 who is charged with a crime, the identity of the minister at the heart of the story was spreading in media and political circles yesterday as people returned to work after the Christmas break.

It is now only a matter of time before the minister's identity becomes widely, if unofficially, known.

These five stamps to commemorate the life of Diana, Princess of Wales, will go on sale on 3 February. They feature photographs by Lord Snowdon, Tim Graham, John Stillwell and the late Terence Donovan. Each stamp has a purple border as a mark of respect

IN TOMORROW'S INDEPENDENT

Tartan: check it out for the new year
FASHION

Beloved and Bonk: Our divorcee's diary continues
FEATURES

Award-winning novelist Rachel Cusk's resolution
FEATURES

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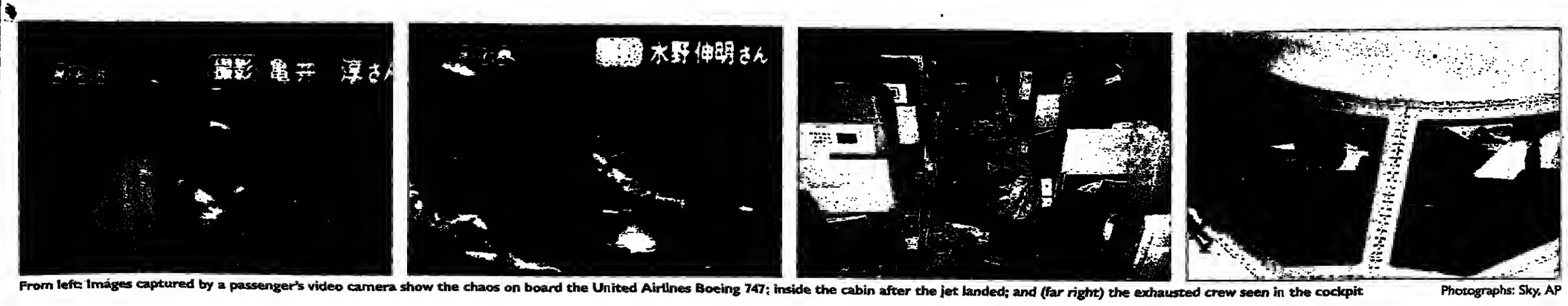


From left: Images captured by a passenger's video camera show the chaos on board the United Airlines Boeing 747; inside the cabin after the jet landed; and (far right) the exhausted crew seen in the cockpit Photographs: Sky, AP

The invisible menace that left one dead and 102 injured

An injured passenger being carried to a hospital after returning to the New Tokyo International Airport, Narita, yesterday Photograph: Reuters

A dangerous atmospheric condition made a United Airlines jet plummet 1,000 feet, throwing passengers *from their seats* and leaving one dead. Another 102 were injured before the pilot *regained control. Ian Burrell* reports on the terrifying phenomenon of clear air turbulence.

Flight UA826 was cruising at 33,000 feet, two hours out of Narita airport in Tokyo, when it lurched, began to rattle then suddenly dropped like a stone.

Passengers who had just finished their evening meal were hurled into the ceiling of the aircraft. Some people suffered broken limbs, others had bloodied faces and neck injuries.

Amid the screaming, the pilot pleaded for calm. "We have just hit air turbulence and the aircraft descended 300 metres. There is no danger of a crash," he called over the intercom.

But among the 374 passengers flying to Honolulu, Hawaii, there was panic, captured by one of them on video and shown yesterday on television.

"Suddenly the plane dropped and people were jumping and falling, and things came flying at me – like juice cans, food," said Chieko Ejiri, 28, who was on her way to a holiday with her boyfriend. "I saw people with bleeding bandages on their heads and someone with his arm in a sling. And one person was crying out in pain," she added.

"I thought I was dying," said Kiyotaka Eto, a 16-year-old student from Osaka who was going on a surfing holiday. He said his seat belt saved him from injury, although he felt his body floating upwards during the drop.

His friend, Yuji Takahashi, 17, who was not wearing a belt, said, "I hit my head on the ceiling. It was like something straight out of the movies."

The plane was dropping towards the northern Pacific until the pilot brought it back under control and flew back 1,100 miles to Tokyo to be met by the emergency services. Some passengers emerged from the plane on Sunday night in neck braces, others on stretchers or wrapped in blankets.

United Airlines blamed the incident, which was over in seconds, on "severe clear-air turbulence". A spokesman said 10 passengers required hospital treatment.

"The seat belt sign was on when the plane was hit by severe turbulence," said spokesman Tony Molinari. "There had to be folks who weren't belted."

The Federal Aviation Authority said it would now investigate "because we're always interested in turbulence issues".

Clear air turbulence is the atmosphere's equivalent to the eddies that form in rivers where fast-moving waters and slower waters come together. Because it occurs in areas without cloud it is invisible and difficult for pilots to detect.

However, meteorologists issue charts which warn airlines of likely areas of clear-air turbulence, as well as thunderstorms and dense areas of cloud.

The turbulence typically occurs at a height of between 30-35,000ft. The plane experiences "wind shear" as it moves from a jet stream of, say, 300 knots into one of 40 knots, causing rapid loss of lift as it meets the eddy.

Such turbulence is fairly common and there have been a succession of such incidents this year. In June, a Japan Airlines jet hit turbulence near Hong Kong and 11 passengers and crew were injured, one suffering a fractured pelvis. A month later, a Qantas aircraft flew into turbulence between Brisbane and Tokyo leaving 23 injured, three seriously. Then an Alitalia jet hit turbulence shortly before landing in Caracas in September injuring19, some with broken bones.

Air passengers more frequently experience turbulence when flying through cumulonimbus clouds but the affects are far milder.

Researchers in California are close to developing a radar system which they hope will enable pilots to identify areas of clear-air turbulence on their instrument panel.

Royal Academy's 'Sensation' proves to be a shockingly good crowd-puller

The Royal Academy's 'Sensation' exhibition of young British artists which prompted protests and resignations was hailed yesterday as one of the most successful shows it has ever held. *Louise Jury* explains why it proved such a crowd-puller.

The British public flocked to see explicit pornography, a blood-filled head and a portrait of Moors murderer Myra Hindley made from children's handprints, according to figures released yesterday.

The Royal Academy (RA) said 284,734 people – around 2,800 a day – visited the show over the last three months, despite pleas from families of Hindley's victims not to attend.

More than 400 people also attended a public debate to discuss the works, which were deemed more shocking than almost anything else in the academy's 230-year history.

The exhibition featured 110 works by some of the biggest names in young "Brit art", loaned from the collection of Charles Saatchi, the advertising executive and art collector who runs his own gallery in north London.

The graphic nature of the exhibition forced the RA to erect warning notices and to transform one of the15 viewing rooms into an adults-only zone. Among the works this contained was an exhibit by the brothers Jake and Dinos Chapman featuring child manneqnins with grotesque genitalia grafted onto their heads.

The portrait of Myra Hindley was vandalised, once with blue paint and once with eggs, by outraged members of the public within the first few days of the show opening. It was restored within a week, but security was stepped up.

An RA spokeswoman said yesterday: "It is true to say that the work in the exhibition has caused a sensation and shocked people, but we are not afraid to shock people. The public have said to us that they are internationally acclaimed artists and they should be shown. It has been very successful."

A Mori survey commissioned by the RA disclosed that 33 per cent of those who visited said they enjoyed the exhibition much more than they thought they would and 91 per cent felt the RA should show art even if it shocked or caused offence.

Nearly half the visitors – 48 per cent – were under 35 years old, and 11 per cent went as part of a school visit.

Sensation is now due to tour galleries in Europe.

DAILY POEM

From "Actaeon"

By Ted Hughes

(The hunter Actaeon has disturbed the goddess Diana bathing in a pool with her nymphs)

So she scooped up a handful and dashed it
Into his astonished eyes, as she shouted:
"Now, if you can, tell how you saw me naked."

That was all she said, but as she said it
Out of his forehead burst a rack of antlers.
His neck lengthened, narrowed, and his ears

Folded to whiskery points, his hands were hooves,
His arms long slender legs. His hunter's tunic
Slid from his dappled hide. With all this

The goddess
Poured a shocking stream of panic terror
Through his heart like blood. Actaeon

Bounded out across the cave's pool
In plunging leaps, amazed at his own lightness.
And there

Clear in the bulging mirror of his bow-wave
He glimpsed his antlered head,
And cried: "What has happened to me?"

This week's poems come from the five volumes shortlisted for the 1997 Whitbread Poetry Award. The winner will be announced next Tuesday, 6 January, along with the other Whitbread winners for biography, fiction and first novels. This extract is taken from Ted Hughes's *Tales from Ovid* (Faber, £7.99).

Baby dies after hospital tells woman in labour to go home

The family of a woman whose baby died after being born at home demanded an apology yesterday from the hospital which turned her away three times when she was in labour.

Gemma White, 21, gave birth at her parents' home on Christmas Day, less than two hours after she was discharged from Doncaster Royal Infirmary. The baby, born 22 weeks into the pregnancy, was rushed to the hospital. He died three hours later. Mrs White was first turned away by the hospital on 23 December – told that her stomach pain was linked to a urinary infection. She returned on Christmas Eve, was sent home again; and was admitted at 3am on Christmas Day but discharged six hours later and told to keep taking antibiotics. Doncaster Royal Infirmary refused to comment.

Warning on diabetic drivers

Diabetic motorists who do too little to control their condition may be as big a danger as drink-drivers, experts warned yesterday. Consultant physician Dr David Kerr and specialist nurse Joan Everett, from the Royal Bournemouth Hospital, said in the *Journal of Diabetic Nursing* that low blood-sugar levels caused similar symptoms to being drunk and Britain's 370,000 insulin-treated diabetics needed to be more aware of the dangers, after a study of 2,000 accidents caused by drivers who collapsed at the wheel showed 340 of them were due to diabetic patients suffering a drop in blood sugar.

Stalemate in chess battle

England's Michael Adams and Viswanathan Anand of India drew the fourth game of their World Chess Championship semi-final in 46 moves at Groningen, the Netherlands. With scores level at 2-2, they will have a play-off to meet Anatoly Karpov in the final.

Record takings in the sales as shoppers' cars choke cities

After a disappointing Christmas and a slow start to the sales, shops across Britain reported record takings yesterday. Winter clothes were on offer at half-price in some stores, and retailers promised more cuts to get rid of unsold stock left over from before Christmas.

City centres all over Britain ground to a halt as drivers headed for the sales. Liverpool was gridlocked and traffic was brought to a standstill in Manchester, Sunderland, Bolton, Chester and Birmingham. Sales traffic was also heavy in Canterbury, Tunbridge Wells, Croydon, Southampton, Oxford, Truro and around London's Brent Cross shopping complex.

An RAC spokesman, Rob Maynard, said: "People are prepared to queue in their cars for hours to get the bargains they want."

The Lakeside shopping centre in Thurrock, Essex, said takings were 10 to 12 per cent up on last year. "It has been an exceptional day," said a spokesman. "We are expecting 140,000 by the end of the day."

The MetroCentre in Gateshead was also having a record-breaking time with 300,000 people visiting over the weekend and yesterday. A lot of the shoppers were spending their windfall from the Northern Rock building society's conversion to a bank.

Selfridges director David Elliott, who is also vice president of the Oxford Street Traders' Association, said: "It has been absolutely packed today. There are record numbers of people – 12,000 more than last year in our store alone. There are obviously a lot of people who are still on holiday. Men's clothes are selling well. We have had a lot of half-price stock and we will be making further reductions in the next 24 hours."

Marks & Spencer reported busy high street shops up and down the country.

The CBI said many manufacturing industry businesses were on two weeks' holiday – but many other workers in retail and leisure industries were having their busiest periods. Clive Vaughan of Verdict retail analysts said: "More and more people are taking a fortnight off over Christmas so there is plenty of time for going to the sales.

"Records are being broken in some places, particularly out-of-town shopping centres."

Jobs boom, page 22

Stardust memories: A guitar smashed by Pete Townshend at a Who concert in 1973 (estimated at £8,000-£12,000) and James Bond *Goldfinger* poster are among items in Russell Baldwin and Bright's auction of rock and film stars' memorabilia to be held in Leominster on 7 January Photograph: Justin Slee

Tories raise spectre of one-party state

An attack on the Government's alleged appointment of 'placemen' to quangos was widened last night by Brian Mawhinney, the former Tory Party chairman. *Colin Brown*, Chief Political Correspondent, says the Tories see the 'quango state' being replaced by the 'one party' state.

Brian Mawhinney last night accused the Government of appointing placemen to public bodies across the country. Widening a Tory attack on the Government for sacking Tories from NHS hospital trusts, the Tory Party's former chairman said: "I think there is a common thread running through this Government, which is pursuing centralised control."

He was supported by John Redwood, the shadow Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, who said the Government was creating new quangos, such as the commission on low pay, but was failing to appoint representatives of small businesses, because they might offer critical advice.

It followed a call by John Maples, the Tory spokesman on health, for an inquiry by Sir Leonard Peach, the Independent Commissioner for Public Appointments, into the "politicisation" of health service boards in an alleged breach by the Government of the Nolan Code of Practice on openness and transparency. Mr Maples said: "Good people with proven track records and business experience are being thrown off health service boards. They are being replaced by large numbers of Labour councillors, without so much as a letter of thanks."

Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health, robustly denied the Government was replacing Tory placemen with Labour "yes" men and women to run NHS hospital trusts. He said he would not appoint Labour "deadheads" to replace "Tory deadheads", but he wanted to increase the number of women on boards, and improve local representation.

A promise to "decentralise political power throughout the UK" was one of the 10 key priorities for the Parliament in Labour's election manifesto.

The Prime Minister made the attack on quangos part of his first speech in the Commons after winning power. Opening the debate on the Queen's Speech, Tony Blair said: "A Britain that is young of mind and confident of its future must change a situation in which unelected quangos spend more money than elected local government." Mr Blair told the annual Labour party conference two years ago: "It is time to sweep away the quango state."

David Clark: Consultation period ends tomorrow

Jack Straw launched a Labour commitment on open government in September 1996 that included a promise to impose tougher regimes for controlling the way quangos conduct their affairs.

David Clark, Cabinet minister for public service, published a consultation document in November to fulfil that pledge; the consultation period ends tomorrow.

However, the consultation paper *Opening up Quangos* made it clear the Labour Government finds the quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations have an important role to play. In the health service, they have the task of helping ministers to abolish the internal market in the NHS.

In a report to Sir Leonard, Mr Maples accused Mr Dobson of dropping Sir Brian Hill as chairman of the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Lady McIntosh, who is a Labour councillor and academic, and also the wife of the Labour deputy chief whip in the Lords.

Other replacements cited in his report included Clive Wilkinson, the ex-Labour leader of Birmingham City Council, for Brian Baker, a businessman in the West Midlands; Frank McCarney, who manages the office of Mike O'Brien, the junior Home Office minister, for David Hopkins, chairman of the George Eliot Trust; and Mary Styth, a Labour councillor, for the chairman of the North Lakeland NHS trust.

Mr Dobson strongly defended his action, insisting that Ms Styth was the chair of a number of health bodies in the area with wide experience in the social services, the disabled and the elderly.

Rooms at the Ritz cheaper than places in 'child jails'

Places at the first of five new 'child jails' will be the most expensive in Britain, costing twice as much as luxury rooms at the Ritz for every offender. The disclosure, says *Jason Bennetto*, Crime Correspondent, is the latest controversy to hit the Government's policy of locking up young offenders.

Persistent criminals aged 12 to 15 will cost an estimated £200,000 to £250,000 a year to keep at the forthcoming secure training centres.

The expense of the privately run units was attacked yesterday by probation officers who argued that the money could be spent more effectively. They will cost six times more than a boot camp, about 50 per cent more than local authority secure accommodation, and twice as much as a room at the Ritz.

Group 4 plans to open a secure training centre at Cookham Wood, Kent, in April which will house 40 persistent offenders aged 12 to 15.

Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, caused outrage among penal reformers when he announced in July that he was to go ahead with a modified version of his Tory predecessors' plans for five mini "jails" despite arguing against them in Opposition.

Figures obtained by the National Association of Probation Officers suggest that the cost per offender per year at Cookham Wood will be at least £250,000 – £5,000 a week. Group 4 refused to comment on costs, but sources suggested that the figure was less – around the £200,000 mark.

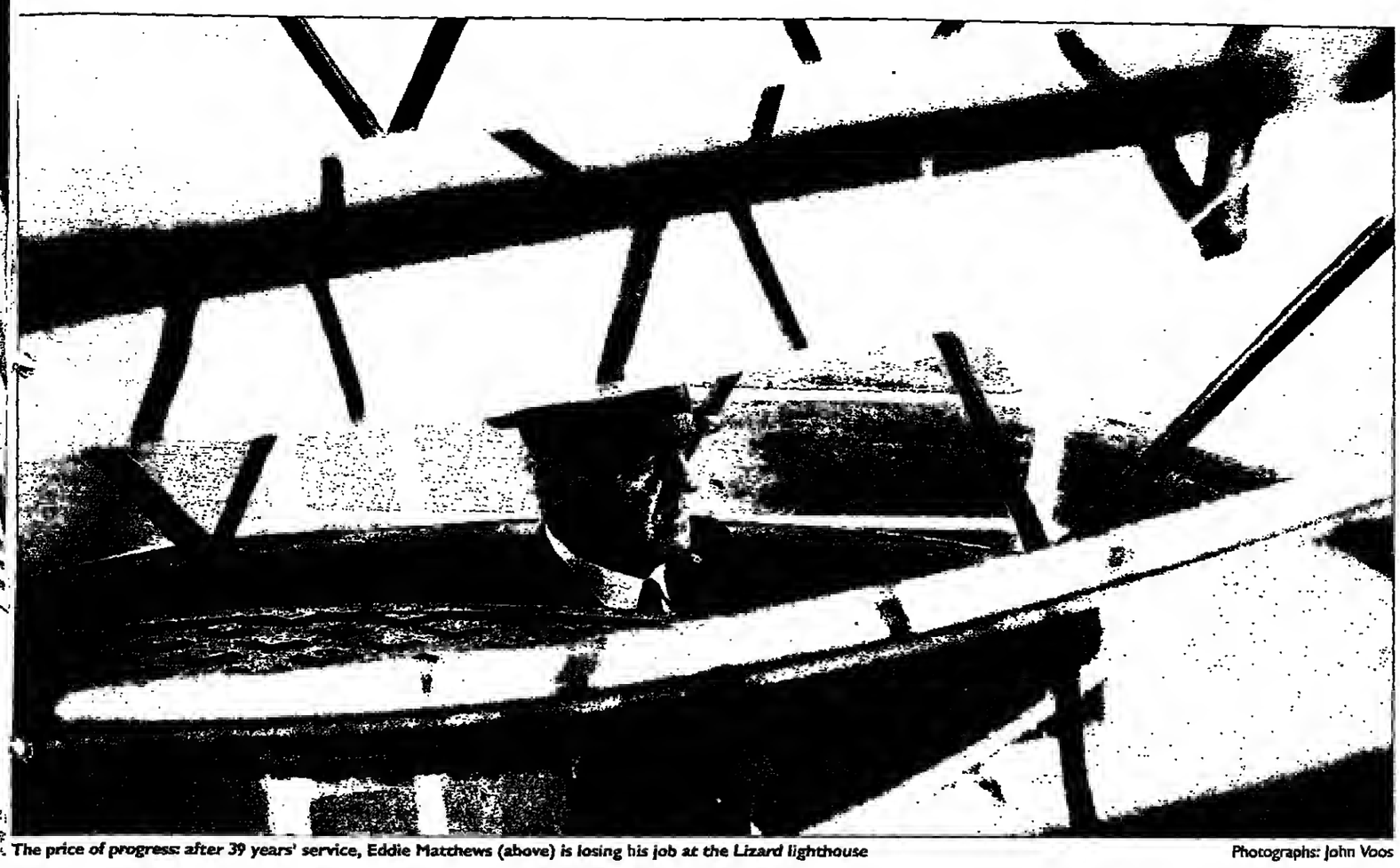
Either amount compares unfavourably with current accommodation. A place in a local authority secure unit costs about £130,000 per year and £32,000 in the Government's military boot camp; at Long Lartin high security prison the cost is about £50,000, while a deluxe bedroom at the Ritz hotel in London costs £355 a night or the equivalent of £130,000 a year.

The high cost of Cookham Wood is partly due to the intensive training and education provided and the high number of staff – there will be about 100 for 40 residents. The offenders will each have their own secure bedroom and the centre will have a fence around it.

The Government has given the go-ahead to build five new secure training centres for 200 youngsters who have committed three or more offences. A new detention and training order for young offenders is contained the Crime and Disorder Bill.

Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, said: "The resources would be better used either by a consortia of local authorities or managed by the Department of Health."

The four other centres, which have yet to obtain planning permission, are intended for Campsfield near Oxford, Gringley in Nottinghamshire, Onley, Warwickshire, and Medomsley, Co Durham.



The price of progress: after 39 years' service, Eddie Matthews (above) is losing his job at the Lizard lighthouse

Photographs: John Voos

The lights go out on the loneliest profession

A handful of men have spent their final Christmas guarding the beacons that guide seafarers through Britain's turbulent waters. In the New Year, the few lighthouses that remain manned will be automated. *Kathy Marks* reports on the end of a *centuries-old tradition.*

When the winter storms blow in from the Atlantic and the howling winds gust to 110mph, Lizard Point in Cornwall is an inhospitable place. Many a ship has been wrecked there over the years. But for Eddie Matthews, principal keeper of the lighthouse, the elements are a source of never-ending theatre.

Mr Matthews is one of a exclusive breed of men for whom home is a granite tower surrounded by seagulls and crashing surf. For nearly 400 years, keepers have tended the lights that warn sailors off treacherous stretches of coastline. Now their lonely and romantic profession is to be consigned to history.

A programme to mechanise all the lighthouses around the British Isles is nearing completion. Of the 150 once manned around England, Scotland and Wales, only nine remain occupied. By next autumn, all the lighting systems will be controlled and monitored by computer from base stations in Harwich and Edinburgh.

With 39 years in the job, Mr Matthews is Britain's longest-serving keeper. Last Wednesday he completed an eight-hour watch before settling down to Christmas dinner. In March he will be made redundant. He is stoical about the advance of progress, but believes technology cannot replace the human touch. "It's going to be a sad day when I leave," he said. "To me this is a way of life, and the way of life is gone. We are a seagoing nation and the keepers are the heart of the support system. If you take out the heart, you're left with a cold slab of granite. We are the eyes; if anything happens out at sea, we will spot it."

Mr Matthews, who was born in The Lizard, has served at some of the most isolated lighthouses, including Bishop Rock, off the Scilly Isles, and Wolf Rock, off Land's End, where ferocious storms can engulf the tower in a wall of sea. Ten years ago he was posted back to Lizard, at the southernmost tip of Britain..

Much has changed since he started out. "Back then we only had a steam radio and you pickled the meat after the first two days. Now it's like a floating hotel. We've got TV, video, stereo, you name it. The only thing I miss is my pint of beer."

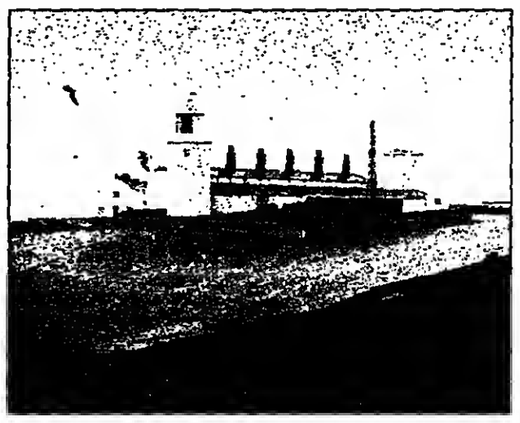
Each lighthouse has two teams of three men who work one month on, one month off, covering a 24-hour day. As well as operating and maintaining the light, they supply weather reports, activate the foghorn and alert coastguards if a ship is in difficulty.

Cost-cutting is the driving force behind the automation programme. With the advent of modern navigation aids, the beacons have grown less important to the shipping companies that fund them. Trinity House, the authority responsible for England and Wales, says that £1.5m per lighthouse will be saved during the 15-year life of the new equipment.

The five remaining manned Scottish lights, which include Fair Isle South, between Orkney and Shetland, will be evacuated at the same time as Lizard. The last lighthouse to be left alone with the wind and the tides will be North Foreland, Kent, next October.

Trinity House stopped recruiting keepers 15 years ago, but still receives applications.

Mr Matthews is not surprised. "I love the solitude of it, the slow pace," he said. "When I'm off duty, I often sit up in the lantern and look out at the ocean. It's open sea to the horizon 29 miles away. It's a terrific view; I can watch it for hours."



Charisma not class succeeds at university

Students who went to single-sex schools find it no more difficult to adjust to university life than those who went to co-educational ones, says a new report.

***Judith Judd*, Education Editor, describes a study which confounds both the supporters of co-education and the champions of single-sex schools.**

Conventional wisdom has it that single-sex schools are better for academic work but that co-education is a better preparation for life. According to researchers from Brunel University, neither is true.

They questioned 100 first-year university students and found that students' personalities were much more important than the type of school they attended in determining how well they settled in.

The challenges of cooking, washing and learning to study more independently loomed much larger than coping with the opposite sex.

Boarding school proved to be no better preparation for university life than day school. Only a gap year and A-level results had any significant effect on the ease with which they adjusted to their new lives. The gap-year students found returning to work more difficult than their peers, but settling in to their new lifestyle slightly easier. Those with better A-level grades found it it more difficult to settle in.

High-performing students may be more aware of the difficulties than their peers, suggest Professor Alan Smithers and Dr Pamela Robinson, the study's authors. Or they may find it less easy to get on with fellow students.

Some of the students from girls' schools did admit that it was odd having boys around but most "anticipated difficulties which did not arise". One said she found it "refreshing to be around boys rather than girls, because I found even though academically I benefited from single-sex education, it gets very bitchy if it's just girls".

Yet the study also questions the notion that young people necessarily get better results in single-sex schools. A study published two years ago by Professor Smithers found that, though single-sex schools topped the examination league tables, their success derived from their intake and traditions rather than the fact that they were single-sex.

A further study looking at the performance of girls and boys in different types of schools, based on the 1997 GCSE and A-level results, produced complicated findings. At GCSE, girls in co-educational independent schools appear to do slightly better than those in single-sex independent schools.

At A-level, girls' performance does not appear to be affected by a single-sex or mixed school. And, though boys' single-sex selective schools are ahead of all other types of school, this is at least partly thanks to the fact that they are even more highly selective than other schools because of their history and traditions, the authors say.

● A-level exams should be scrapped in favour of a Scottish Highers-style system forcing sixth-formers to study more widely, head teachers said yesterday. The A-level system, which encourages most 16-plus pupils to study just three subjects, is out of date and does not prepare youngsters for the world of work, the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) claims.

Nanny's appeal date set

The British nanny Louise Woodward has been given a date for the hearing of appeals in a US court against her manslaughter conviction.

Woodward could know in a little over two months if she faces a minimum 15-year jail sentence or whether she will be free to come home.

The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court is due to hear appeals on 6 March, from both Woodward and the prosecution against her conviction for the manslaughter of eight-month-old Matthew Eappen while she worked for his parents.

Woodward, 19, from Elton, near Chester, has been forced to remain in Massachusetts while the appeals are heard.

The court schedule for the appeals means opening arguments from both the defence lawyers and the District Attorney's office will be lodged by 20 January. Briefs arguing against the appeals will be filed by 17 February, with both sides lodging their replies 10 days later.

The Massachusetts court system has given priority to the appeals because of the huge publicity and controversy surrounding the case.

A jury at the Middlesex Superior Court in Cambridge convicted Louise of second-degree murder, but the judge later reduced the conviction to manslaughter and freed her by imposing a sentence equal to the 279 days she had already spent in custody.

Giants who dictate diet of the nation

In the second part of our series on supermarkets, *Ion Burrell* examines whether the revolution in British food retailing has allowed stores to dictate the diet of the nation. Opposite, *Jojo Moyes* looks at Safeway's efforts to become the shop for all the family.

British supermarkets are, by almost common consent, the best in the world. But their reputation for quality control, good value and high food safety standards has been achieved only by a ruthless professionalism which has left other sectors of the British food industry reeling.

When Cornish farmers produced a supply of cauliflowers which tasted good but were yellow, they were told by the supermarkets to plough 100 acres of crops back into the soil.

Beef farmers have been distressed to find that while supermarkets claim to have every confidence in their product, the unlabelled meat on their shelves has often been imported from Ireland.

Fishermen in Newlyn, Cornwall, are furious that large Cornish supermarkets often ignore their fresh catches in favour of stocking seafood from Scotland and elsewhere. Elizabeth Stevenson, secretary of the Cornish Fish Producers' Organisation, said the supermarkets preferred to deal on a national basis with the larger companies who could guarantee a regular supply.

"The supermarkets are very keen on fixed price, fixed size and fixed amount of supply. They need the continuity," she said. "I think that is sometimes to the detriment of quality. It should be easier to get fresh fish from a port five miles away than to bring it from Scotland."

As the supermarkets strive for an ever-more exotic range of choice, so British suppliers are increasingly overlooked.

The arrival of iceberg lettuces from southern Europe after 1988 has helped reduce Britain's self-sufficiency in salad products from 89 per cent to 74 per cent. Similarly, only 25 per cent of apples consumed here are British, compared with 90 per cent self-sufficiency in France.

With the food having to travel further, it is often more exposed to chemical preservatives. Research by the campaign group Friends of the Earth suggested over Christmas that 40 per cent of fresh produce sold in Britain contained residues of pesticide. "The supermarket policy is more about profit than broadening taste," FoE spokesman Adrian Bebb said.

In the course of their transformation into superstores, the grocers have subsumed other sectors of the food industry. The number of master bakers has plummeted from more than 12,000 in the Fifties to fewer than 4,000. According to Trevor Dixon, chief executive of the Association of Convenience Stores, thousands of grocers, butchers and other traditional shops are going out of business each year.

"They just don't have the facilities to compete and there is still a tremendous haemorrhaging going on," he said. "In the neighbourhood environment the convenience store is often the only retailer left."

In 1972, 90 per cent of milk was delivered to our doors, compared with less than 37 per cent today. To the fury of environmentalists this has helped bring about the collapse of reusable glass bottle in Britain.

Concern have also been voiced about the intense marketing by supermarkets of pre-prepared meals at the expense of fresh produce. Further, supermarkets are only willing to deal with a small number of growers who are prepared to invest in new equipment for temperature control and handling their produce. Many of the remaining suppliers have gone to the wall.

Nevertheless, this philosophy has led to the raising of food standards world-wide. In Kenya, field-pickers once harvested beans in unhygienic conditions to be sent to Britain for packaging. Now, at the insistence of the supermarkets, the products are pre-priced and packaged by trained workers before being air-freighted.

According to Douglas Henderson, chief executive of the Fresh Produce Consortium, such efficiencies have allowed British supermarkets to "come out top on a world-wide basis". He said supermarkets did not dictate to shoppers but could react quickly to their tastes by using electronic check-outs. "They are becoming progressively more sensitive to demand because of the sophistication of their IT systems," he said.

While the supermarket revolution has reforged the food supply chain out of all recognition, the modern consumer is presented with an unprecedented range of more than 20,000 lines in major stores. As David Hughes, professor of agriculture at Wye College, University of London, said: "The supermarkets allow people to elect to make food choices which they feel reflect their aspirations and lifestyle."

Sinking feeling: Fishermen in Newlyn, Cornwall, are angry that local supermarkets often ignore their fresh catches in favour of supplies from Scotland Photograph: Tom Pilston

Battle for the family market intensifies

Safeway was a great British buyout, which soared in sales after freeing itself from its huge American parent a decade ago. But it is now under pressure from rivals as it tries to define itself as the supermarket chain for families.

Colin Smith, chief executive of Safeway, says he is the longest-serving chief executive among the big supermarkets. It's quite an achievement. He has been in the post since ... oh, 1993. According to one analyst, these short tenures at the top are a fair measure of the pressures of the job, and of the speed at which the business moves.

It shows at Safeway, which in three years has taken itself away from being seen simply as a lower-quality rival to Waitrose. The group has gone after one core market, the family shopper. But will that be enough?

Mr Smith, married with two sons, is a family man. According to a colleague: "He does the family shop himself from time to time, shops in competitors' stores, and has very strong empathy for mums and kids, with limited budgets and time".

Perhaps with this in mind, at the height of the recession when supermarkets were floundering, Mr Smith set about a massive overhaul of the group, dubbed Safeway 2000.

The company refocused and stores now appeal to value-seeking family shoppers rather than to higher-income couples. In this way he increased number of shoppers by 50 per cent in two years, although last month the group warned of non-existent sales growth, with analysts observing that it was losing out to Sainsbury's.

Perhaps, say some, the age of the great supermarket patriarchs is over. Prior to Mr Smith, Safeway's public face was that of Sir Alistair Grant, who retired as chairman in April from his place in the triumvirate of larger-than life characters, along with Sainsbury and MacLaurin. With finance director David Webster (now chairman), Sir Alistair had bought the British subsidiary of the giant American supermarket group Safeway in 1986-87. Once it was independent, turnover soared from £1bn to £7bn over the next few years.

Mr Smith and Mr Webster use information gleaned by institutions such as the Henley group to determine Safeway's direction. According to customer development director Roger Partington, the results are often surprising.

"We had thought that the shopper just wanted a continuing array of choice and variety, which they do, but it also creates confusion ... Our average supermarkets sell between 22 and 25,000 lines. It can be a bit daunting. So we set about ways to make it easier." It was information from customers that was the genesis of a pilot scheme in Basingstoke, "collect and go", where customers can ring up and order basic grocery items, and collect them when they do their fresh goods shop.

According to one Safeway insider, everything the company does is to make things easier for families. "Harry and Molly [the children in TV advertising] convey our general market position, very much aimed at families with children 0-5," he said.

Safeway is also adopting the "market-hall" concept favoured by Asda, with increasing in-store pharmacies, dry cleaners and own-range kids clothes, replicating the traditional high street.

The group thinks there is little left to be gained from straightforward price competition, because the market is now so keen. Safeway has launched "Price Protected" – if customers buy a product cheaper elsewhere, the store gives it to them for free.

So where next? Last year, it launched a venture with BP to base "proper" supermarkets in 24-hour petrol stations. This may not appeal to some, but according to Safeway, it is the future. It must hope so. Because another version of the future in the trade has it that Safeway will be swallowed up by its aggressive, expansionist rival, Asda.

— *Jojo Moyes*

TOMORROW:

Even when we are not buying their goods, the supermarkets are exerting power and influence over our lives ... and the men behind Asda.

Holding on: The ubiquitous Ambassador taxis lining up for customers in a back street of New Delhi

Photograph: Tom Pilston

Ambassador gets a 30-year service

Americans describe it as "a Beetle on steroids", but to any British person of a certain age it looks like what it is: a Fifties *Morris Oxford (or Austin Cambridge)* with a different grille and two odd-looking scoops taken out of the bonnet.

It is the Hindustan Ambassador, and for 30 years it reigned supreme over an automobile market in which very little else was available.

Today, India's roads are choked with locally produced Daewoos and Suzukis, but the Ambassador still holds its own as the car of government, the armed forces, and the universal taxi. And it is not yielding its place without a fight. Last week Hindustan Motors, manufacturer of the Ambassador, announced that it was investing 750m rupees (£11.5m) in revamping the car, improving its quality and finish and producing new niche models: a 2-litre diesel for hilly terrain, a liquid gas-powered model for environmentally conscious city-dwellers, and a bullet-proof version (in collaboration with armoured vehicle specialist Okara Izenhort of the United States) for the nervous. For the time being its unmistakable look will stay the same.

Ambassadors have for years been notorious in India for their poor finish, heavy handling and proneness to alarming accidents. One local driver recalls waiting years to take delivery of his "Amby", only to find the new car had six major defects right there in the showroom. But the staid, suburban English saloon was tough and it went native, bouncing across ploughed fields packed to the gunwales with passengers, coping well with pot holes, violent treatment, amazing distances and colossal loads. Changing gear could dislocate your shoulder, but the car was practically indestructible – and when it did fall apart, the local blacksmith knew how to fix it, and even today a new axle cost only 500 rupees (under £8).

Hindustan Motors still produces 2,000 Ambys a month, 150 per month down on 1996 but still a respectable number.

It was never the only car available in India, but the introduction of India's first real subcompact, the Maruti (in collaboration with Suzuki) in 1985 gave the Ambassador a jolt from which it never recovered. With the liberalisation of imports over the past six years the Indian traffic jam is gradually losing its distinctive character. But new Ambassadors, fitted with 74bhp Isuzu engines, are much more reliable than their predecessors and, as a subcontinental answer, half a century on, to the Model 'T' Ford – tough, cheap (under £4,000 new) and easy to repair – it has probably got a good few years left in it.

— Peter Popham, Delhi

Palestinians turn car theft into act of rebellion

Israel has one of the highest rates of car theft in the world. The thieves are mostly Palestinian and the victims Israelis. Patrick Cockburn in Jerusalem says political divisions have created a car thieves' paradise.

Four times in the past four years Lily Herchkovitz has woken up in her house in the Arnona district of Jerusalem to find her car has been stolen overnight.

It happened first in 1993 when her Subaru 88 was taken. "I guess I was lucky that time," says Mrs Herchkovitz, 46, who runs an employment agency. "I had left a pile of Zionist literature on the back seat and the [Palestinian] thieves, having driven to Bethlehem, decided to burn it. They parked the car, and set the offending papers on fire. There was such a lot of smoke that the border police were alerted. My car was returned to me within 24 hours."

Yasser Arafat: 'Does worse than turn a blind eye'

The next year, the Subaru 88 was stolen for good. In 1995, the Subaru Legacy '91 she bought to replace it went and, a few months later, her new Mazda. "I'm wiser now,' Mrs Herchkovitz says. "I'll never buy a Subaru again, since it's so popular with thieves."

Israel's rate of car theft is three times higher than that in the US. Nobody is immune. Earlier this year, a Mercedes worth 350,000 shekels (£70,000) belonging to Ovadia Yosef, the spiritual leader of the religious party Shas, was stolen despite being equipped with elaborate anti-theft devices. It was found in Hebron, partly stripped.

The thefts are one aspect of the struggle between Israel and the Palestinians. Car thieves are usually Palestinian; the victims Israeli. The district where you are most likely to have your car stolen is the Sharon area, north of Tel Aviv. It is close to the Palestinian autonomous enclave at Tulkarm, where cars are cut up for spare parts in what are known locally as "slaughter houses".

As Palestinian living standards plummeted over the last five years because Israel repeatedly sealed off the West Bank and Gaza, car theft became one of the few growth industries. Rubbish dumps near Palestinian towns are often heaped with the remains of stripped vehicles.

Israelis say the Palestinian Authority of Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, does worse than turn a blind eye. At the end of October, Israeli police manning the main checkpoint into Gaza at Erez stopped General Zihraya Balusha, a senior officer in Palestinian security, who was driving in a Mercedes from Ramallah on the West Bank. Although he presented a VIP card allowing him through, the police discovered the car had been stolen four days before in Tel Aviv.

A few days earlier, police confiscated a Mercedes at Erez which had been stolen only the night before in Jerusalem. It was being driven by Musa Abu Sabha, a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, from Hebron. He claims he was set up by "people in the Palestinian Authority who are bothered by my stand against corruption". A few days later Mr Arafat reportedly ordered the arrest of Dr Jibril Tilhani, the director-general of the Palestinian Ministry of Transport, on suspicion that he headed a ring which smuggled stolen cars from Israel to Gaza.

But the heart of the problem is very simple. Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank are desperately poor. Their per capita income has fallen by 15 per cent since 1992. Employment of Palestinians in Israel has dropped by three-quarters. Car theft is easy. In October, police stopped a stolen car and found in the vehicle a price list showing how much thieves are paid for different models. The prices ranged from about £70 for a Honda Civic to £300 for a Chevrolet Corsica.

Amos Yaffe, managing director of the ISI insurance agency, says about 40 per cent of all claims are for car theft. "There's a joke going around the insurance companies – why not pay Arafat 500 million shekels (£100m) up front for not stealing our cars," he said.

Some drivers offer ransoms for their cars by calling the thieves on the mobile phone, a common attachment in Israeli vehicles. In one co-operative farming community, Moshav Beit Yitzhak, north of Tel Aviv, which lost 60 cars in two years, residents set up their own security company which patrols 24 hours a day. Asked who steals the cars, Eli Kolan, 41, the community manager, says: "Tulkarm residents. It's only about 10 kilometres from here, so in three minutes they are back home. In my opinion, they have inside information because we have about 50 [Palestinian] labourers from Tulkarm. We can't manage without them."

Netanyahu faces budget deadlock

The Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, last night faced the collapse of his economic strategy as squabbles within his coalition resulted in the government being defeated on three clauses of the 1998 budget, which must be adopted by midnight on 31 December.

By law Mr Netanyahu has three months' grace, until 31 March. If he fails to have the budget sorted out by then, he has to call new elections.

Two ministers from smaller parties, Avigdor Kahalani and Rafael Eitan, demanded that he go to the country immediately.

Mr Netanyahu and his Finance Minister, Ya'acov Ne'eman, attempted to impose a cost-cutting Thatcherite budget on a coalition that has no appetite for economic ideology.

Each faction fought to extract maximum benefit for its voters, adding billions of shekels to the bill and casting doubt on the Prime Minister's authority to force through a further withdrawal from the West Bank.

Cuts in family allowances and the health service were dropped. Vast sums were promised to religious seminaries, West Bank settlements and a growing army of unemployed. But he still failed to satisfy all the coalition all the time.

— Eric Silver, Jerusalem

Penguin proves to be souvenir too far

A Japanese tourist has been charged with trying to abduct a rare penguin and for disturbing the world's only mainland albatross breeding colony, on the Otago Peninsula in New Zealand.

Takasiko Yamasaki, 30, appeared in court yesterday after police found a Blue penguin inside a bag in his rented car.

The blue penguin is a protected species which nests at sites along the peninsula, below the cliff-top Taiaroa Head albatross colony.

Mr Yamasaki has been charged under New Zealand's Wildlife Act with abducting the penguin and with unlawfully entering the enclosed yard of the colony.

— AP, Dunedin

Officials trying to catch chicks in order to gas them at a chicken farm in Hong Kong yesterday

Photograph: Larry Chan/Reuters

HK pins hopes on chicken slaughter

Hong Kong authorities were confident yesterday that they had exterminated their entire stock of poultry in the drive to halt a mysterious strain of flu. *Stephen Vines* watched the exterminators at work and asks if this drastic measure will succeed.

At Hong Kong's central market, traders were unceremoniously breaking the necks of chickens under the eye of officials wearing white face masks and plastic gloves. They watched the chickens packed into black bin liners, which were sealed and piled into trucks taking them to landfill sites for burial.

The traders killing the livestock did not look much happier than the chickens packed in cages, awaiting slaughter. Although they stand to get some £2.30 compensation per bird, traders may also lose their business for the foreseeable future.

At a poultry farm near the Chinese border where the bird flu, known as the H5N1 virus, was found to be present, white-coated agricultural and fishery department officials arrived grim-faced with large canisters of carbon monoxide to gas the livestock.

With the birds dead, and the threat of prosecution for anyone found harbouring live poultry, a massive clean-up and fumigation exercise is under way which should leave Hong Kong with the cleanest poultry farms and markets in the world. But the bulk of the poultry entering the territory comes from the Chinese mainland, and there the authorities insist there is no sign of the H5N1 virus.

A Hong Kong health official said yesterday he had little doubt that the virus was present, albeit undetected, on the mainland. Siu Jun, a spokesman for China's Guangdong Quarantine Department, pledged full Chinese support in the fight against the potentially lethal flu.

The fear in Hong Kong is that if swift action is not taken, the virus will mutate and spread more readily from humans to humans. Until a boy died as a result of contracting the virus last summer, it had been thought that H5N1 was confined to chickens. It has now claimed four human lives in Hong Kong out of thirteen confirmed and seven suspected cases. The virus itself is not lethal. But if it is not identified early enough it leads to complications which can cause death.

There has been a surprising welcome in Hong Kong for the mass slaughter. But there is criticism of the way the government is handling potential victims.

Vast queues have been forming outside government clinics because authorities have declined to give testing materials to private doctors who outnumber those in public service. This is putting pressure on the public health sector and reducing the monitoring needed to keep the disease under control.

Mrs Gandhi enters fray

India's election battle moved into full swing yesterday, with the beleaguered Congress party announcing the entry of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi's widow into the fray.

Bringing an end to weeks of silence, during which leaders of her late husband's party had called for her support, Italian-born Sonia Gandhi said she would campaign for a Congress victory in the spring poll.

The return of the once hugely popular and charismatic Nehru-Gandhi family to the political stage came amid signs that the Congress party's arch-rival, the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), was well in the lead. An opinion poll for the *India Today* weekly showed that the BJP, which has backed a moderate leader, was set to substantially increase its strength in parliament.

Congress put India on course for its second elections in less than two years last month by cutting off crucial support for the minority United Front government.

The Congress party suffered its worst electoral rout amid allegations of corruption in 1996, five years after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi by a suicide bomber.

— Reuters, New Delhi

Nuclear 'guinea pigs' call for inquiry

Australian veterans who monitored British nuclear tests in the outback in the Fifties yesterday called on the Australian government to launch a study into birth defects and illnesses they say were caused by radiation.

The call followed the publication in Australia of a British study which found high rates of birth defects in the grandchildren of British veterans of nuclear tests in Australia and the South Pacific.

Ric Johnstone, president of the Australian Nuclear Veterans Association, said many of the 12,000 to 15,000 Australian nuclear veterans had died from cancer and had deformed children. Many were ordered to stand with their backs to the explosions or to enter test sites immediately after an explosion, wearing little if any protective clothing, he said, adding: "We were definitely guinea pigs."

Defence ministry officials were unavailable for comment.

— Reuters, Sydney

Today we publish the updated results of The Independent Fantasy Football League. The player scores are for all League games played until Sunday December 28th. The league table includes all scores up to December 21th. The manager who is the overall winner will win a trip to the world cup finals in France next Summer.

Every time one of your players score you get four points. There are four points for a keeper or a defender every time their team keeps a clean sheet. If a player scores the winning goal, i.e.: if there is a one goal difference in the scoreline, the player scoring the final goal for the winning team is awarded 1 bonus point awarded in addition to standard goal related points. Each successful Assist, a pass judged by our experts to lead directly to a goal, will give a player 3 points. The opinion of our experts on the matter is final. Each player selected and starting a game will be awarded one point.

If a player is given a Yellow Card they lose 1 point, if a player is given a Red Card they lose 3 points. Own goals, either scored or conceded, do not count.

The Premiership Manager that you choose will be awarded 3 points if their real-life team wins, 1 point is awarded if they draw and no points are given if they lose.

Updated player scores and league tables will be published every Tuesday in *The Independent* and repeated the following Sunday in the *Independent on Sunday*.

INDEPENDENT FANTASY FOOTBALL

OVERALL SCORE CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 8 AUGUST - 28 DECEMBER

LEAGUE TABLE

CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 8 AUGUST - 21 DECEMBER

POS	NAME	TEAM	POINTS
1	Mr B Sari	The Untouchables	683
1	Mr D Aston	Billy Boys 2nd II	683
3	Mr D Baker	Deja Vu	681
4	Mr Archer	No Wright	679
5	Miss Lisa Wild	Amarretto AFC	674
6	Mr I Boyle	Wembly Bounders	673
6	Mr A Wingrove	Tony's Brace	673
6	Mr T Lyons	Diana's Demons	673
9	Mr B Sari	Simply the Best	671
9	Mr C King	Seeking Victory	671
9	Mr P Tufler	Pin Ups 4	671
9	Mr D Evans	Bothen End Old Boys	671
9	Mr J Cox	Southville FC	671
14	Mr J McCrossam	Washed Up Army	668
15	Mr S Scott	Unbeatable	662
16	Mr D Aston	Billy's Boys 3rd II	660
17	Mr D Edmington	Edmo United	658
18	Mr I Brown	The Hoofers	657
18	Mr C Thomas	Scunthorpe Extras	657
20	Mr D Baker	Dead Beat	654
20	Mr S Scott	The Dream Team	654
22	Mr D Ackroyd	Jack's Lads	651
23	Mr G Ford	Linthorpe Rovers	650
23	Mr K Boyle	Clogston Rovers	650
23	Mr G Bell	Stunning Stunts	650
23	Mr Brady	Look Lively	650
23	Mr F Henderson	Secondary Celtic	650
28	Mr M Pawley	Robert's Raiders	649
29	Mr M Ewins	Mike's C Team	647
29	Mr D Baker	SPF Rules	647
31	Mr M Ward	Team A40	645
32	Mr J McCrossam	Washed Up Army	644
32	Mr G Bell	The Hairy Monsters	644
34	Mr M Ewins	Started but will I Finish	643
34	Mr A Choudhi	Nickies 9th II	643
34	Mr M Ewins	Mikes A Team	643
34	Mr A Mitchell	The Eye For It	643
34	Mr A Cunningham	The Zebra	643
34	Mr J Cox	Retro Rovers	643
40	Mr D McCarrer	McCarrer II	642
40	Mr R Sheridon	The Frank Large Fan Club	
642			
42	Mr M Rickard	Aller Lamberg	641
42	Mr Mr T Russ	Sam's Soccer Scorchers	641
42	Mr S Walker	Daniel's United	641
42	Mr T Brazier	Wow for Short	641

CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	WK	OV	VALUE (£m)
GOALKEEPERS					
300	Seaman	ARS	2	47	4.0
303	Lukic	ARS	0	0	1.0
304	Manninger	ARS	0	0	3.0
305	Bosnich	AV	2	34	4.0
306	Oakes	AV	0	7	1.5
307	Watson	BAR	0	25	1.0
308	Lesse	BAR	0	12	1.0
309	Flowers	BLA	1	30	5.2
330	Filan	BLA	0	12	1.5
333	Branagan	BOL	0	45	1.2
334	De Goey	CHE	1	56	1.0
335	Grodas	CHE	0	0	1.0
336	Ogrizovic	COV	0	57	2.2
337	Hedman	COV	2	8	1.0
338	Nash	CRY	0	0	1.0
339	Day	CRY	0	0	1.0
340	Poom	DER	0	50	1.2
341	Hoult	DER	0	0	1.0
344	Southall	EVE	0	24	3.0
345	Gerrard	EVE	0	4	1.5
346	Martyn	LEE	2	39	3.3
347	Beeney	LEE	0	0	1.0
348	Keller	LEI	2	43	2.5
349	Poole	LEI	0	0	1.5
350	James	LIV	2	48	3.5
353	Warner	LIV	0	0	1.0
354	Schmeichel	MAN	0	63	5.5
355	Van Der Gouw	MAN	0	0	1.0
356	Given	NEW	0	26	2.5
357	Hislop	NEW	2	13	2.5
358	Pressman	SHEF	6	39	3.0
359	Taylor	SOU	0	0	1.0
360	Beasant	SOU	0	0	1.0
363	Walker	TOT	2	45	3.4
364	Barthez	TOT	0	0	1.0
365	Miklosko	WH	0	13	1.5
366	Sullivan	WIM	2	43	2.7
DEFENDERS					
400	Dixon	ARS	2	34	2.5
403	Upson	ARS	0	6	2.0
404	Petit	ARS	1	48	4.2
405	Grimandi	ARS	0	27	2.7
406	Winterburn	ARS	1	63	2.5
407	Bould	ARS	1	27	2.5
408	Adams	ARS	0	58	4.5
409	Keown	ARS	2	10	4.5
430	Staunton	AV	4	40	3.0
433	Southgate	AV	0	34	5.2
434	Ehiogu	AV	1	47	3.0
435	Nelson	AV	2	35	1.2
436	Wright	AV	2	37	3.0
437	Scimeca	AV	2	22	2.2
438	Grayson	AV	5	37	2.2
439	Moses	BAR	5	30	1.5
440	Appleby	BAR	0	16	2.0
443	Thompson	BAR	0	6	1.0
444	Kruzan	BAR	0	12	1.0
445	Berg	MAN	10	51	3.4
446	Le Saux	CHE	1	49	5.0
447	Coleman	BLA	0	0	3.0
448	Hendrie	BLA	6	48	4.4
449	Kenna	BLA	6	54	1.0
450	Henshaw	BLA	6	53	2.0
453	Valery	BLA	0	20	3.0
454	Andersson	BLA	0	4	2.5
455	Cox	BOL	1	7	2.5
456	Elliott	BOL	0	12	3.0
457	Fairclough	BOL	1	5	2.0
458	Taggart	BOL	0	19	2.5
459	Bergsson	BOL	8	52	1.5
460	Duberry	CHE	1	33	3.0
463	Petrescu	CHE	1	75	3.0
464	Lambourde	CHE	0	2	3.0
465	Leboeuf	CHE	1	60	5.0
466	Sinclair	CHE	1	45	2.5
467	Dasch	COV	0	0	2.7
468	Shaw	COV	2	43	2.2
469	Burrows	COV	1	37	2.2
470	Haworth	COV	0	11	1.5
473	Edworthy	CRY	0	29	1.5
474	Gordon	CRY	4	49	2.0
475	Muscat	CRY	0	14	1.0
476	Tuttle	CRY	0	11	2.0
477	Linighan	CRY	1	40	2.0
478	Roberts	CRY	5	43	3.0
479	Hreidarsson	CRY	2	33	1.0
480	Stimac	DER	5	30	3.3
483	C Powell	DER	6	57	1.8
484	Laursen	DER	5	31	1.5
485	Eranio	DER	0	58	2.5
486	Phelan	EVE	0	10	1.0
487	Short	EVE	1	36	3.0
488	Watson	EVE	1	41	2.7
489	Unsworth	WH	6	31	3.0
490	Hinchcliffe	EVE	2	37	3.5
493	Billic	EVE	0	5	4.0
494	Kelly	LEE	4	59	3.6
495	Wetherall	LEE	2	54	2.5
496	Molenaar	LEE	2	26	2.5
497	Dorigo	LEE	0	0	1.2
498	Robertson	LEE	2	47	2.5
499	Walsh	LEI	1	48	2.2
501	Whitlow	BOL	2	29	1.2
503	Elliott	LEI	1	72	1.2
504	Watts	LEI	0	0	1.6
505	Wright	LIV	0	10	3.0
506	Ruddock	LIV	0	2	3.0
507	Harkness	LIV	2	23	1.2
508	Kvarme	LIV	0	42	2.5
509	Babbington	LIV	0	29	2.5
531	Matteo	LIV	2	29	3.0
533	McAteer	LIV	2	24	3.7
534	G Neville	MAN	5	67	4.2
535	P Neville	MAN	5	49	4.5
536	Irwin	MAN	0	33	2.5
537	Pallister	MAN	6	67	3.0
538	May	MAN	0	0	3.5
539	Johnsen	MAN	6	32	3.5
540	Silva	MAN	0	0	3.5
543	Albert	NEW	0	26	4.1
544	Howey	NEW	1	12	2.7
545	Peacock	NEW	0	22	3.0
546	Barton	NEW	1	29	3.3
547	Beresford	NEW	1	40	2.2
548	Bloudeau	SHEF	0	6	2.2
549	Nolan	SHEF	5	44	1.9
550	Atherton	SHEF	6	51	1.9
553	Walker	SHEF	6	41	2.5
554	Stefanovic	SHEF	2	12	1.0
555	Newsome	SHEF	5	37	1.5
556	Monkou	SOU	1	34	1.7
557	Dodd	SOU	4	40	2.5
558	Benali	SOU	0	32	1.5
559	Van Gobbel	SOU	0	1	1.5
560	Lundekvam	SOU	0	20	1.2
563	Scales	TOT	0	21	1.4
564	Campbell	TOT	1	36	4.0
565	Calderwood	TOT	6	32	2.9
566	Austin	TOT	0	0	2.2
567	Edinburgh	TOT	0	18	1.6
568	Carr	TOT	2	43	1.2
569	Mabbutt	TOT	1	19	1.5
570	Ducks	WH	0	0	3.5
573	Rieper	WH	0	12	2.7
574	Hall	WH	0	0	3.0
575	Potts	WH	4	14	1.5
576	Ferdinand	WH	6	30	2.5
577	Impey	WH	0	16	2.2
578	Turner	WH	0	0	2.0
579	Perry	WIM	0	35	4.0
580	Cunningham	WIM	2	38	1.5
583	Thatcher	WIM	-2	23	2.0
584	McAllister	WIM	0	1	1.5
585	Kimble	WIM	1	27	1.5
MIDFIELDERS					
600	Platt	ARS	5	24	2.5
601	Parlour	ARS	6	26	2.4
604	Vieira	ARS	0	0	2.7
605	Vieira	ARS	2	22	4.5
606	Overmars	ARS	2	40	6.0
607	Mendez Rodriguez	ARS	0	1	2.0
608	Taylor	AV	2	29	1.9
609	Townsend	AV	0	3	3.2
610	Draper	AV	9	38	4.1
633	Marcelle	BAR	2	4	2.0
634	Ruffell	BAR	0	9	1.2
635	Redfearn	BAR	2	48	1.5
636	Eaden	BAR	2	15	1.2
637	Tinkler	BAR	2	20	1.0
638	Dunis	BLA	0	0	3.0
639	Wilcox	BLA	0	29	3.0
640	McKinlay	BLA	1	10	2.5
643	Sherwood	BLA	2	32	3.4
644	Flitcroft	BLA	1	10	3.0
645	Frandsen	BOL	2	27	1.5
646	Thompson	BOL	0	36	2.8
647	Pollock	BOL	2	21	1.2
648	Jeffers	BOL	9	31	1.5
649	Gullitt	CHE	0	9	4.4
650	Di Matteo	CHE	1	26	5.0
653	Wise	CHE	1	24	3.7
654	Newton	CHE	0	4	2.4
655	P Hughes	CHE	0	3	1.0
656	Babayaro	CHE	0	7	3.0
657	Teller	COV	2	19	1.8
658	Richardson	SOU	1	17	2.4
659	McAllister	COV	0	17	3.0
660	Salako	COV	0	13	2.4
663	Johansen	COV	0	0	2.0
664	Simpson	DER	0	1	1.2
665	Asanovic	DER	0	9	3.0
666	D Powell	DER	1	3	1.2
667	Van Der Laan	DER	0	6	1.0
668	Dailly	DER	0	12	1.2
669	Hunt	DER	0	8	2.0
670	Parkinson	EVE	0	0	1.8
673	Grant	EVE	0	7	2.2
674	Farrelly	EVE	1	7	2.0
675	Stuart	EVE	3	26	2.5
676	Speed	EVE	0	17	2.7
677	Bowyer	LEE	4	17	3.0
678	Wallace	LEE	2	64	1.8
679	Sharpe	LEE	0	0	2.5
680	Ripert	LEE	1	41	1.5
683	Haaland	LEE	5	21	2.5
684	Parker	LEI	1	10	2.5
685	Taylor	LEI	0	0	1.6
686	Izzet	LEI	8	38	2.1
687	Lennon	LEI	6	22	3.2
688	Guppy	LEI	6	40	1.7
689	Barnes	NEW	1	38	3.0
690	Redknapp	LIV	1	15	5.2
693	McManaman	LIV	14	72	5.9
694	Thomas	LIV	0	12	3.0
695	Leonhardsen	LIV	2	25	4.0
696	Giggs	MAN	1	44	7.4
697	Beckham	MAN	1	54	7.0
698	Keane	MAN	0	14	7.0
699	Butt	MAN	1	26	7.0
700	Poborsky	MAN	-1	10	5.5
703	Lee	NEW	1	20	3.6
704	Batty	NEW	-2	6	3.8
705	Gillespie	NEW	5	34	2.5
706	Beardsley	BOL	2	20	2.0
707	Ketsbaia	NEW	0	20	2.0
708	Blinker	SHEF	0	0	2.5
709	Hoek	SHEF	-1	5	1.8
710	Whittingham	SHEF	0	37	1.7
713	Carbone	SHEF	1	45	3.0
714	Magilton	SHEF	0	18	2.4
715	Slater	SHEF	0	2	1.5
716	Oakley	SOU	5	19	1.2
717	Anderton	TOT	0	7	4.0
718	Ion	TOT	5	34	3.5
719	Howells	TOT	0	10	1.2
720	Ginola	TOT	2	40	3.5
723	Sinton	TOT	1	16	3.0
724	Nielsen	TOT	6	19	2.5
725	Williamson	LVI	0	13	2.0
726	M Hughes	WIM	8	20	2.0
727	Menzies	WH	0	0	2.5
728	Bishop	WH	0	2	2.5
729	Berkovic	WH	4	53	2.5
730	Lomas	WH	2	18	3.0
753	Jones	WIM	2	15	2.5
754	Earle	WIM	5	30	3.1
755	Ardley	WIM	2	31	2.0
756	Bean	WIM	0	0	2.0
757	C Hughes	WIM	0	14	2.0
STRIKERS					
800	Bergkamp	ARS	5	72	5.5
803	Wright	ARS	1	61	7.2
804	Bergkamp Repeat	ARS	0	0	2.0
805	Anelka	AV	0	32	6.7
806	Joachim	AV	0	13	2.4
807	Collymore	AV	0	20	5.1
808	Wilkinson	BAR	0	6	1.2
809	Hendrie	BAR	0	10	1.5
830	Hirsley	BAR	6	14	1.5
833	Sutton	BLA	0	21	4.5
834	Gallacher	BLA	0	71	3.0
835	Dublin	BLA	0	13	4.0
836	Mcinally	BOL	0	5	2.2
837	Blake	BOL	1	57	2.7
838	Zola	CHE	0	50	9.0
839	Vialli	CHE	5	56	3.5
840	M Hughes	CHE	0	28	4.4
843	Tore Andre Flo	CHE	4	39	3.0
844	Dublin	COV	5	62	3.5
845	Whelan	COV	5	9	3.0
846	Huckerby	COV	7	42	3.5
847	Soltvedt	COV	0	16	1.5
848	Lightbourne	COV	0	0	1.5
849	Dyer	CRY	6	27	2.0
850	Freedman	CRY	0	2	2.0
853	Ndah	CRY	0	3	1.0
854	Shipperley	CRY	5	36	2.0
855	Ward	BAR	7	35	2.5
856	Sturridge	DER	1	33	5.0
857	Wanchope	DER	2	40	3.0
858	Ferguson	EVE	14	37	6.5
859	Barmby	EVE	5	19	4.5
861	Deane	LEE	0	0	3.0
863	Lilley	LEE	0	8	1.5
864	Hasselbaink	LEE	6	40	3.0
865	Claridge	LEI	1	9	3.5
866	Heskey	LEI	2	32	5.5
867	Fowler	LIV	16	53	9.5
868	Berger	LIV	0	20	4.0
869	Owen	LIV	12	55	2.5
870	Scholes	MAN	5	37	6.0
873	Cole	MAN	5	71	6.2
874	Solskjaer	MAN	6	44	7.0
875	Sheringham	MAN	5	60	5.0
876	Neville	MAN	0	0	2.0
877	Shearer	NEW	0	0	10.0
878	Asprilla	NEW	1	20	7.4
879	Ferdinand	TOT	0	28	5.0
880	Tomasson	NEW	0	24	4.0
883	Gudjonsson	NEW	0	0	2.0
884	Humphreys	SHEF	0	2	2.5
885	Booth	SHEF	6	37	3.5
886	Hirst	SOU	0	37	3.5
887	Le Tissier	SOU	1	30	7.0
888	Evans	SOU	0	6	1.5
889	Ostenstad	SOU	1	13	3.2
890	Armstrong	TOT	0	13	5.9
893	Iversen	TOT	1	7	4.0
894	Barnson	WH	2	70	5.0
895	Kitson	WH	11	26	3.5
896	Holdsworth	BOL	0	13	3.5
897	Ekoku	WIM	0	26	4.0
898	Gayle	WIM	2	20	4.0
899	Euell	WIM	0	7	1.5
MANAGERS					
900	Wenger	ARS	4	34	7.5
905	Little	AV	4	26	5.0
904	Wilson	BAR	4	18	2.0
905	Hodgson	BLA	2	41	5.0
906	Todd	BOL	1	21	2.5
907	Gullitt	CHE	1	39	4.5
908	Strachan	COV	3	23	3.0
909	Coppell	CRY	2	23	2.0
910	Smith	DER	3	32	2.0
933	Kendall	EVE	3	20	2.5
934	Graham	LEE	1	35	3.5
935	O'Neill	LEI	1	28	4.5
936	Evans	LIV	6	36	7.0
937	Ferguson	MAN	3	46	9.0
938	Ruddock	NEW	0	26	7.0
939	Heat*	SHEF	0	9	4.0
940	Jones	SOU	1	21	2.5
941	Francis*	TOT	0	15	4.5
942	Redknapp	WH	6	31	3.3
943	Kinnear	WIM	1	24	4.5

*currently out of management

Thousands flee Mexico terror gangs

Convoys of heavily armed troops, church workers and volunteers are escorting thousands of frightened Tzotzil Indians from at least three villages where armed bands have ruled by threats and violence since March. The gangs, loyal to Mexico's ruling party, are blamed for the massacre of 45 people a week ago in Chiapas state, where guerrillas of the Zapatista National Liberation Army have waged a four-year-old insurgency aimed at securing rights for the region's poor Indians.

The evacuees (pictured left) are being taken to Polho, a village populated mainly by Zapatista sympathisers. Red Cross workers said as many as 3,500 people may be making their way here. The gangs began forming and arming themselves in March, and exploited local farmers in this lush coffee-growing area near the Guatemalan border. — *AP, Polho*

Photograph: Douglas Engle

Corruption is clear winner in Kenya poll

Kenyans voted yesterday in a poll disfigured by blatant corruption. *Ed O'Loughlin* watched chaotic scenes of ballot rigging in the key town of Kitui.

By 10am yesterday, the electoral commission offices in Kitui looked as if they had been ransacked by an angry mob. They had. In the midst of the wreckage stood the local candidate, Charity Ngilu, the first woman to challenge the incumbent president, Daniel arap Moi. It was clear, she said, that the voting in her own constituency was being flagrantly rigged in favour of Mr Moi and his ruling Kenyan African National Union (Kanu).

"They have more ballot papers here than there should be," she said, brandishing the evidence. "They have not delivered them to the polling stations. They have election cards here without stamps. They have everything they need here to make more votes for somebody".

Minutes later, in an adjacent office, the constituency returning officer, Frederick Mutegi, was struggling to persuade Mrs Ngilu and her angry supporters that there was an innocent explanation for the hundreds of voter registration cars they had just found in the bottom of his desk drawer.

"These cards belong to registered voters who did not collect them," he told anybody who would listen. "I was keeping the cards for them but they did not come."

This failed to assuage one of Mrs Ngiulu's top election agents, who punched Mr Mutegi in the face and had to be restrained from jumping over the desk and throttling him.

Seizing the moment, Mrs Ngilu grabbed the ballot papers and voting cards and locked in the boot of her old Peugeot. A strange, low-speed chase then ensued, until Mrs Ngilu, trailed by her cheering supporters and foreign journalists, was cornered at a petrol station by a truckload of armed police.

After a prolonged standoff watched by Mrs Ngilu's supporters, the matter seemed resolved; the car would be driven back to the electoral commission and left there, with the boot still locked.

With widespread allegations of ballot-stuffing, vote-buying, intimidation and impersonation, Kenyan elections are not for the faint-hearted. Riots and fights are commonplace between youths loyal to rival candidates. Last night, police reported two more election-related killings in Nyanza province. Earlier this year, gangs of suspected Kanu supporters killed at least 50 people in the coastal region.

The violence stems mostly from ethnic divisions. Dominated at first by Jomo Kenyatta's Kikuyu tribe and later by Mr Moi's Kalenjin tribe, Kanu has controlled Kenya since independence in 1963.

Kenya's electoral commission, which the opposition accuses of bias, says it expects the count to be finished by tomorrow. With his experience, and access to cash, President Moi remains the firm favourite.

12 parties quit talks after Kaunda arrest

More than a dozen Zambian opposition parties pulled out of political reform talks yesterday to protest over the detention of former president Kenneth Kaunda, and ambassadors from aid-donor countries planned to meet to discuss the arrest.

Mr Kaunda, 73, who leads the largest opposition coalition, was arrested last week on suspicion that he was involved in a failed coup attempt in October. Donor countries were planning to meet to discuss the implications of Mr Kaunda's detention for Western aid, the Norwegian ambassador said.

The Organisation for African Unity, Britain, South Africa, the United States and Libya have called for Mr Kaunda's immediate trial or release.

No charges have been filed against Mr Kaunda, who was scheduled to appear in the Lusaka High Court yesterday. He has refused water and food since his arrest, according to his family and supporters, who have visited him at Mukobeko maximum security prison in Kabwe, 80 miles north of Lusaka.

— *AP, Lusaka*

Oklahoma conspirator awaits his fate

The second stage of court proceedings against Terry Nichols – the sentencing bearing – opened in Denver yesterday, with jurors facing the consequences of the divided verdict they delivered last week. They had found Nichols, 42, guilty of conspiring to bomb the US federal building in Oklahoma City in April 1995, but not guilty of murder. The bombing killed 168 people.

Nichols was accused of plotting the crime with Timothy McVeigh, 29, who was sentenced to death last June. Although Nichols could also receive the death penalty on the conspiracy conviction alone, legal experts believe his conviction on the lesser charges makes it highly unlikely

They say the jury's verdict showed their intention to distinguish between McVeigh's primary responsibility for the bombing and that of Nichols, accused of supplying the explosives, but who was several hundred miles from Oklahoma City at the time of the bombing.

— *Mary Dejevsky, Washington*

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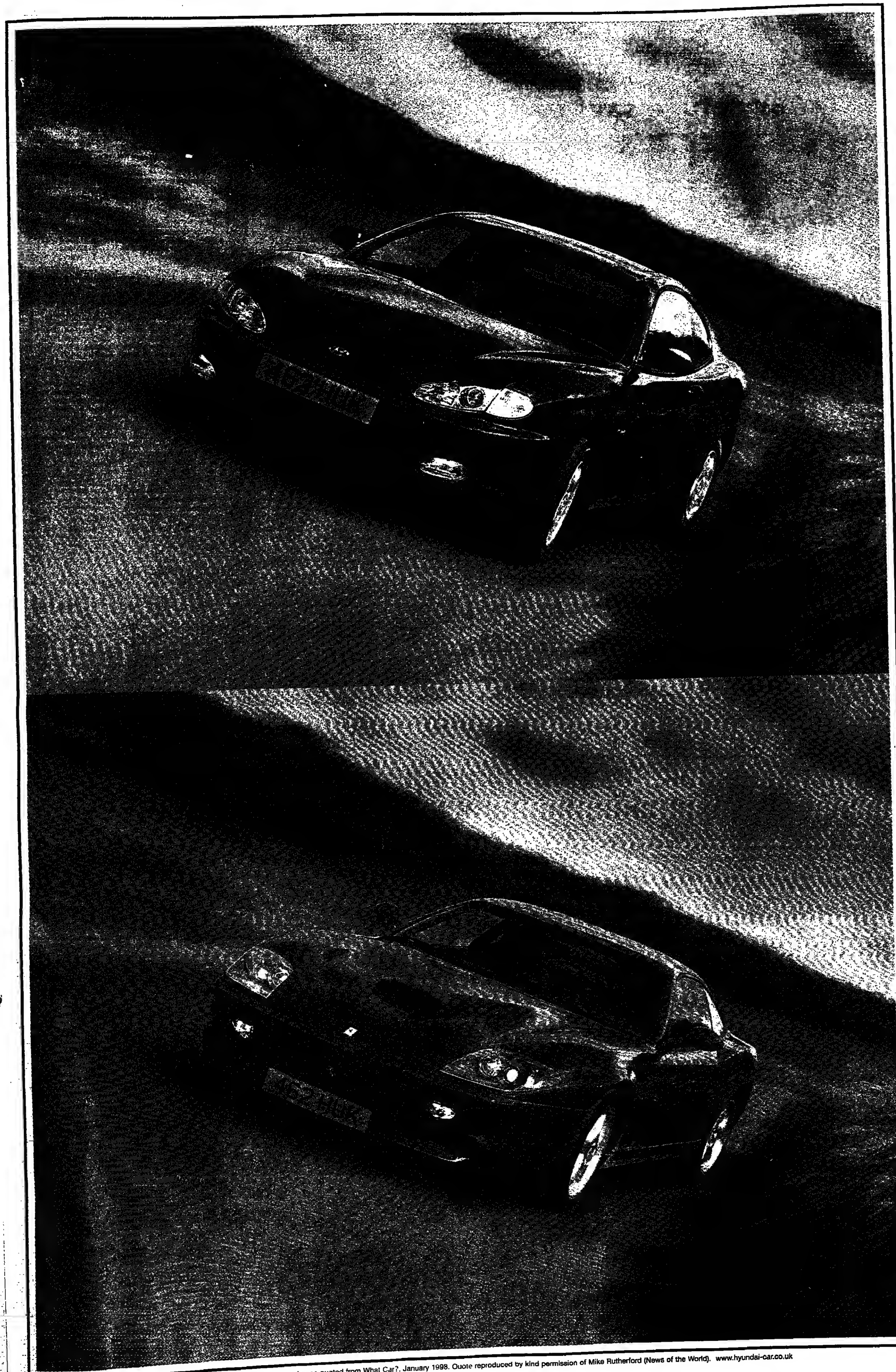

road fund licence. Price correct at time of going to press. Ferrari 550 on the road price quoted from What Car?. January 1998. Quote reproduced by kind permission of Mike Rutherford (News of the World). www.hyundai-car.co.uk

Runaway refuge says under-13s seeking help have doubled

Nowhere to go: Some children would rather sleep rough than live at home

Photograph: Glynn Griffiths

The number of children under 13 seeking help from a runaways' refuge has doubled in the last year, the Children's Society reports today. Yet there are only four safe houses for them in Britain. *Glendo Cooper,* **Social Affairs Correspondent, looks at the problem of child runaways.**

More children run away during January than any other month – and they are getting younger, according to new figures released by the Children's Society.

Calls and referrals from children aged 13 and under doubled during 1997, and the average age of the young people helped has fallen from 14 to 13 in recent years. Between October 1996 and October 1997 five children as young as 10 used the Leeds Safe House - only one of four such refuges in Britain.

In January 1996, the oumber of childreo using the safe house rose by more than one-third. The society thinks that this is because Christmas and the new year can be a stressful time for families. More than three-quarters of young people who cootacted the safe house had run away or beeo thrown out by their families: 11 per cent had run away from residential care, and 5 per cent from foster care.

"Whatever the reason a child has for running away they clearly feel that the situation they are running from has reached a crisis," said Ian Sparks, chief executive of the Children's Society. "... Children who have run away tell us consistently that they have not been listened to by the adults in their life. Unless we listen, problems that may seem unimportant to us can escalate to a point where a young person feels that running away is their only option."

More than six out of ten children called as a result of abuse or threats of violence including sexual abuse and almost 40 per cent called the Safe House because of problems over physical violence. For those in care, violence from other childreo was the most common concern.

The charity called for the Government to provide funding for a oetwork of street and refuge projects for child runaways, as called for in the Utting report. The charity asked for ao urgent meeting with ministers last August but says their request has been refused.

"It is estimated that 43,000 childreo run away every year, maoy repeatedly," said Mr Sparks. "It is a national disgrace that successive governments have left it to charities such as the Children's Society to try to help these most vulnerable children. We still have only four refuges in Britain ... all relying almost entirely on the generosity of the public for funds ... We want to see the Labour government make it an urgent new year's resolution to develop a strategy to tackled the increasing problem of child runaways."

● A study of more than 2,000 calls about child abuse and neglect taken by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Child Protection Helpline over four months found that in 23 per cent of cases of neglect parental misuse of alcohol was mentioned as a factor. It was also reported in 13 per cent of calls about emotional abuse. 10 per cent of calls about physical abuse and 5 per cent of calls about sexual abuse. The NSPCC believes the figures may underestimate the problem with alcoholism often kept secret.

Most commonly, the mother was reported as neglecting her child because she was drinking too heavily. Fathers who misused alcohol were more likely to be reported for physical abuse.

The NSPCC Child Protection Helpline is 0800 500 500

Pagers to tackle school truants

Ministers yesterday backed new ways to tackle truancy including a scheme which will use electronic pagers to tell parents that their children are oot in school.

Stephen Byers, the school staodards mioister, anoounced that the Governmeot was speoding £22m oo 119 locally devised programmes to improve atteodaoce aod behaviour and to reduce the numher of permanent exclusions.

He said: "Truaocy has wide ramifications for the whole community. We want to see an end to children hanging around street corners aod possibly getting involved in petty crime or coming to harm themselves."

One scheme, being tried out in Durham, will issue pagers to the parents of pupils who show signs of becoming persistent truants. If children fail to register or miss a class, teachers will send a message to a parent requesting a call to the school.

In Wolverhampton, parents will be given assertive discipline training to help them insist that their children attend school. Other pupils will also be used to persuade their classmates not to play truant. Devon plans to appoint "return to school" tutors to work with children who are reluctant to go to school. Walsall will operate a system of pupil passes. Bristol will aim to cut the number of exclusioos by introducing a mentoriog scheme for black pupils.

More than 1 million pupils are estimated to have missed at least one half-day session without permission from schools. Io 1995-96 there were 12,500 permanent exclusions from school, an increase of 13 per cent on the previous year.

Mr Byers, a member of the new Social Exclusion Unit, said: "We want to stress the importance of early action to stop childreo from skipping school or misbehaviog in class.

"These projects will be invaluable in providing the Prime Minister's new Social Exclusion Unit with examples of how new approaches can address the growing problem of permanent exclusion and truancy, the scale of which is disturbing."

— Judith Judd, Education Editor

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Alcoholic? Me?

DR PHIL HAMMOND

The National Temperance Society claims more people than ever are shunning alcohol. Should you join them? Dr Phil helps you decide.

Why should I take drinking advice from a doctor?
Good point. An alcoholic, or so the adage goes, is someone who drinks more than his doctor. But if you don't mind the hypocrisy, your GP may at least have some insight in it, which is more than you can say for most illnesses.

Do alcoholic doctors differ from other heavy drinkers?
We tend to hide it better. If medical training teaches you anything, it's how to appear competent with a distillery coursing through your veins. All you need is a stout nurse to lean against and a packet of extra-strong mints. The mints, of course, don't mask the smell, any more than talc covers unwashed genitals, but doctors, like all professionals, can rely on their status to conceal drink problems. Most hospitals have one surgeon who's a bit shaky first thing without a couple of sharpeners to warm him up.

How does alcohol work?
The precise reason why two atoms of carbon, six hydrogens and an oxygen should combine to make you microwave the cat is not fully understood. Alcohol is absorbed into your bloodstream from the stomach and small intestine. This absorption is speeded up if you drink on an empty stomach, and if the alcoholic content of the drink is between 20 and 30 per cent. Thus a surfeit of preprandial sherry can wipe you out before the hors-d'oeuvre.

Alcohol is highly water soluble, and since 70 per cent of the body is water it gets pretty much everywhere. This explains the depressing list of side-effects, eg anxiety, depression, insomnia, dementia, gastritis, oesophagitis, cirrhosis, blackouts, fits, burning legs, chest pains, bronchitis, pneumonia, backache, rheumatism, gout, obesity, infertility and acne.

The only place alcohol doesn't go is fat. Since women have more of it than men and a smaller fluid volume, alcohol tends to concentrate more in their blood. When it reaches the brain, alcohol alters cell membranes and neuro-transmitter function. If this disruption reaches a critical level, you start singing "Ee-oh Tinky Winky" with pants at your ankles.

Although your liver works very hard to stop you making a prat of yourself, the enzymes that metabolise alcohol quickly get saturated, so you can't get rid of the stuff any faster no matter how much coffee you drink and hearty breakfasts you eat. Hence you can still be over the limit on the morning red-eye into work.

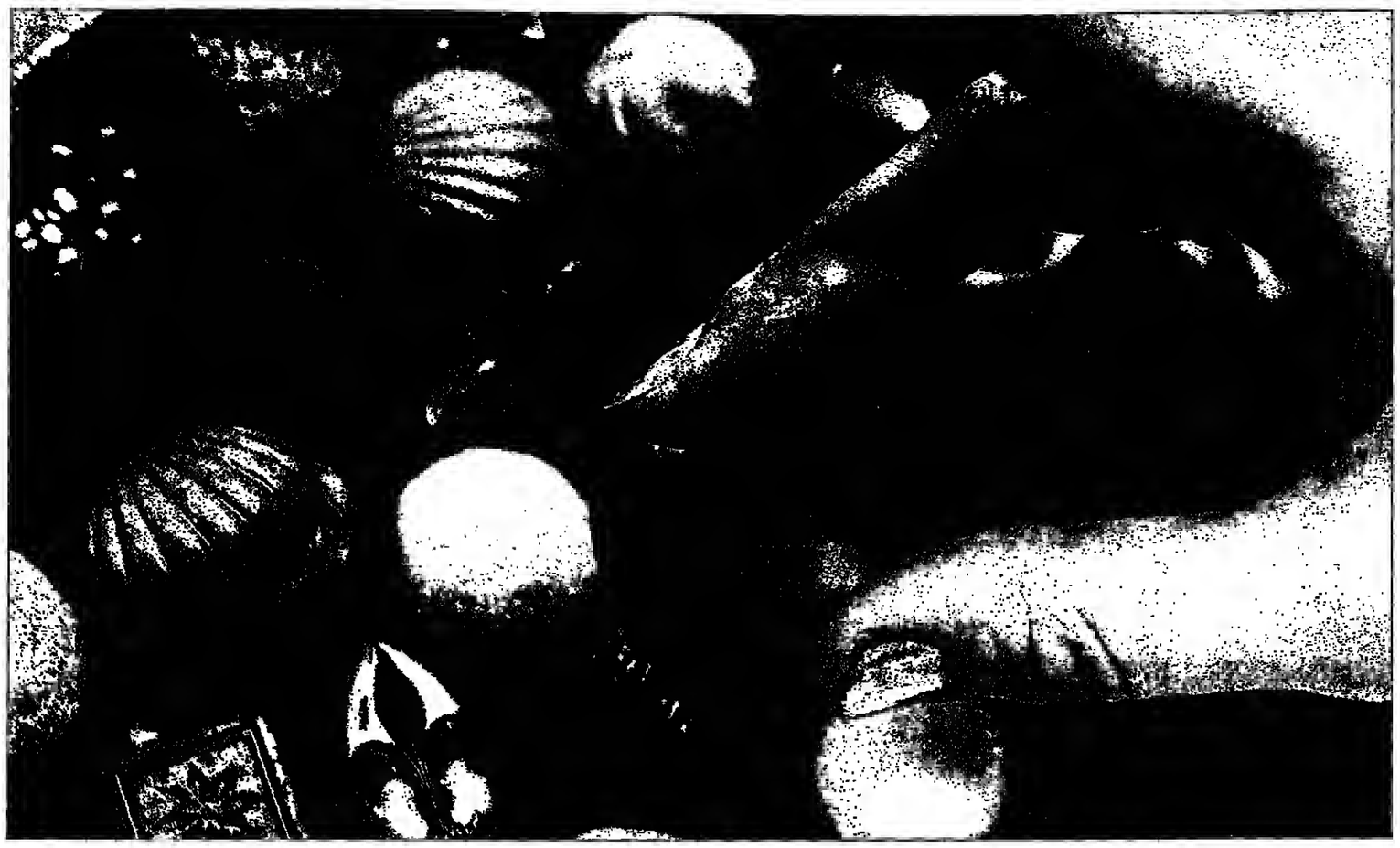
Is alcohol a euphoriant or a depressant?
It can be either, depending on how much you drink and your mood when you started. Euphoria can start at a blood alcohol level of 30mg/100 ml and leads to the sort of disinhibition that can have such disastrous effects when it extends to the operation of heavy machinery. In a simulated driving test, bus drivers with alcohol levels of 50mg/100 ml (still below the legal limit) thought they could drive through obstacles that were too narrow. Such calamities are followed by a profound sense of melancholy and a wish to run away and hide. At 160-200 mg/ml, most of us slur our speech, fall over and pass out. At 400mg/ml, we usually die.

Am I an alcoholic?
Aside from using your GP as a bench-mark, the best person to ask is the one closest to you. Dependence on alcohol can be psychological, when the habit becomes so deeply ingrained that the mere thought of stopping induces outright panic, or physical, when abstinence results in morning shakes, nausea and dry heaves. But the crucial question with alcohol is whether you can control the beast. Can you have a week off without crawling up the wall? If not, get help.

How much is safe?
The recently up-voted safe limit guidelines (21 units spread over the week for women, 28 for men) seem generous until you realise that a unit is only a half of ordinary-strength ale, a glass of wine, half a glass of fortified wine or a tot of spirits. So Miss Sensible should limit herself to a small sherry every eight hours. Party on.

Now the good news please
A couple of drinks a day cuts your risk of premature heart disease by up to 20 per cent. Alas, you can get the same result with unfortified grape juice. Happy New Year.

No more bingeing, no more dieting



PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS LAMBERT

Losing weight is just a matter of curing a food addiction? Sounds unlikely, but if it works... *Millie Jenkins* signed up for 'Eating Less'.

When *Time Out* asked readers what they really wanted, in a Christmas survey, a third of the women who replied said "to be thinner".

But if there is one thing you are guaranteed not to get at this time of year, it's a washboard stomach. I am sure all those wishful thinking women in the *Time Out* survey know that. They probably also know that 95 per cent of people who lose weight on diets later put it all, and often more, back on again. However, that still won't stop them making the same old resolutions in the vain hope that things can only get flatter and firmer in the New Year.

But what if the merry-go-round of seasonal bingeing and dieting could be avoided? Gillian Riley, an addiction counsellor based in North London, runs a course called Eating Less. She is best known for her book on smoking, *How To Stop Smoking and Stay Stopped For Good*, which has sold 40,000 copies. I went to see her three months ago about smoking and haven't had a cigarette since.

So I signed up for Eating Less, hoping that she could work the same magic on my thighs that she has done on my lungs.

"Eating Less" sounded like a sensible, but until now impossible, goal. Recently, when cooking an elaborately low-fat, low-glycaemic, combined (no protein and carbohydrate together) meal, my boyfriend asked, "Why don't you eat normal food, but just eat less of it?"

What a stupid question, I thought. Eating less of a normal meal is a lot harder than eating a lot of some weird concoction that doesn't qualify as real food.

The course, Gillian Riley stresses, is not for people with severe eating disorders. It is for people who have simply had enough of "yo-yoing" in and out, locked into a vicious circle of stuffing and dieting. Often they are just bored to death with worrying about food the whole time. "They may be overweight, or not," says Riley. "What they have in common is an addictive relationship with food – that's too much about pleasure and not enough about health and nutrition." Her definition of an addictive eater includes a slim person who eats only a Mars bar or a bag of crisps for lunch. "It's about how to eat less without feeling you're losing out on something," she says.

The course was to run for five weeks, with each session lasting two-and-a-half hours. And that was just the beginning of the process. Everyone on it is female, and we range from skinny to large. I suspect we all have the same question on our lips: "Exactly how long will getting thin take, please?"

A long time, says Riley: "It's no quick-fix solution. There will be no sudden shedding of pounds."

This process is about changing the way you think about food.

"People often blame overeating on hormones, genes and metabolism, and although biochemical factors are involved, the driving force is addiction in the mind," she says. The course, and the book she is currently writing, are based on a cognitive therapy technique. The aim is to look at thoughts and beliefs about food, unravel the mind's addictive impulses, and retrain it to have a more healthy, balanced relationship with food.

This she believes, is very difficult if losing weight is your only goal.

"When your eating choices are related to how you look, it clouds the real issues."

She advises throwing out the scales and finding other, more valid reasons for eating less – such as reducing the risk of heart disease and cancer, living longer, having more energy and feeling more in control. "The irony of making health your priority," she points out, "is that the healthy body is a leaner body."

But, she adds: "It's a myth that if you eat masses of pasta, rice and wholegrains, you're OK. Eating too much of anything is bad for you. Even being even half a stone overweight increases the risk of degenerative diseases."

It is also important to realise that diets cannot work, for basic psychological reasons: "On any diet, you are always in a state of either compliance or rebellion. The more you comply, by sticking to the diet, the more it sets you up to rebel." So the more you tell yourself you "can't" or "aren't allowed to" eat something, the more likely you are to feel desperately deprived, and end up eating it. "After years of dieting, you tend to have deep problems with deprivation," she says.

The result is that most of us have an "addictive desire" that has been reinforced countless times.

"Addiction is difficult to talk about," says Riley. "It sounds so judgemental. And with food, people assume you mean severe disorders. I think addiction is a matter of degree."

But what is an "addictive desire", as opposed to valid hunger? "Addictive eating," she says, "is eating anything other than what is needed to stay in good health."

This makes my heart sink. Surely all we "need" is a handful of nuts and berries? If so, I'd rather die young and plump than old and thin. Whatever happened to pleasure?

"It's fine to get pleasure out of eating," she assures me, "but eating also needs to be about supporting your body's health." This is about making gradual, sensible changes.

The key is to stop feeling deprived: to have a "free" attitude towards food, with no rules and regulations. This is a psychological trick which I found worked for smoking. The more you tell yourself you really can smoke if you want to, instead of saying you absolutely can't, the less desperate you feel.

Most of us on the course found this idea of "freedom" hard to get our heads round. After all, if you really can eat anything you want, you will, won't you?

The funny thing is, you don't. I thought life would become one long trolley dash. It hasn't.

Riley offers a technique to use at every meal, which helps you to stop and think about the urge to overeat. She encourages you to look at all the excuses you give yourself. Her theory is not about being perfect, so it's not like a diet, where you fall off and that's that. A few weeks on, I don't know whether I weigh less (I threw my scales out) and I don't feel any thinner. But I am eating healthier food and less of it. What I like most is the idea of never going on a diet again.

The difficult thing about her technique is that it's subtle, psychological stuff. It takes a lot of thinking. But thinking is the key. Riley says it is amazing how little research has been done into the psychological side of addictive eating.

"Any research tends to be funded by pharmaceutical companies who stand to make profits on the sales of products," she points out. "It's as if the mind doesn't exist – or if it does, it's of no consequence."

There may be less money to be made using the power of thought, she says, but it is a lot more effective than any pills, quick-fix diet books or plastic surgery.

Gillian Riley, PO Box 2484, London N6 5UX

VITAL SIGNS

A dinner including almonds and turnips and a strategic application of ambergris may be all that is necessary to spice up your love life. A guide to aphrodisiacs included in the new edition of *Regaining Potency: the answer to male impotence* by the *Independent's* former medical editor, Oliver Gillie, says experiments on rats at King Saud University suggest that these are among the most promising preparations for stimulating the sexual appetite. And it saves on champagne and candles. Available from Self-help Direct, PO Box 9035, London N12 8ED, £10.95 (inc p&p).

Drivers who suffer from diabetes may pose as big a risk to other motorists as those who drink, according to a study.

Low blood-sugar levels impair performance. People with insulin dependent diabetes may not realise that their driving ability is affected, researchers say.

A study of 2,000 accidents caused by drivers who collapsed at the wheel found 34% were the result of diabetic patients becoming hypoglycaemic – suffering from low blood sugar. Up to one-third of insulin-treated drivers have reported suffering from hypoglycaemia.

Dr David Kerr, consultant physician, and Joan Everett, a specialist nurse, say in the *Journal of Diabetes Nursing* that there is an urgent need for Britain's 370,000 insulin-treated diabetics to be made more aware of the risks, so that they eat regularly and keep a supply of glucose in their cars.

Scientists have added a further piece to the jigsaw that may one day yield the genetic basis of Alzheimer's disease. Researchers from Washington University School of Medicine in St Louis, US, and the University of Madrid in Spain, compared two groups of individuals with and without Alzheimer's disease. They found three variations in a particular region of the Apo E gene. One of these caused unusually high levels of Apo E. People who had this variation were about three times more likely to have Alzheimer's than those who did not.

The chief researcher, Dr Alison Goate, said, "We believe that higher levels of Apo E expression are contributing to an increase in the risk of Alzheimer's disease."

Jeremy Laurance

Giorgio Strehler

Giorgio Strehler, theatre director: born Barcola, Trieste 14 August 1921; died Lugano, Switzerland 25 December 1997.

Little it was indeed, the Piccolo Teatro in the Via Rovello in Milan. It had only 500 seats and a stage of very modest dimensions. The great theatre director Giorgio Strehler had founded it in 1947, with the help of the publisher Paolo Grassi, transforming an old fleapit of a cinema, where the fascist military police had tortured their victims during the war, into the leading theatre of Europe, and indeed of the world.

How on earth did Strehler do it? The secret is that he was a European through and through. He was one of those lucky mortals to be born into a multilingual family: his father was Austrian, his mother Italian, his grandparents Slav, Viennese and French. They conversed in four languages.

Moreover, he was a child of Trieste, and the Triestine dialect, beloved of the novelist Italo Svevo and the poet/bookseller Umberto Saba, was his fifth language. "Dialect is fundamental," he was to declare, "in the Europe of today. European Union does *not* mean the extermination but the exaltation of particularities, in language and in custom as well as in cheese and wine. Standardisation by the gentlemen of Strasbourg will be the death of life." He always expressed his ideas with typical Triestine dramatic volubility.

Giorgio Strehler studied dramatic art at the Accademia dei Filodrammatici in Milan and the Geneva Conservatory. He graduated in 1940, and at once started an acting and directing career in various travelling companies like the Gruppo Palcoscenico with which he produced works by Pirandello. A committed socialist, he was active in the Italian Resistance before going into exile in Switzerland.

From as early as 1942 he had begun publishing polemical writings that had made him a target for Mussolini's secret police. He wrote about "the responsibilities of the stage director" and the dramatic sterility of state-run theatre.

In Geneva, he produced his own company, La Compagnie des Masques, in Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* (1944). In his book "A Theatre for Life" (*Per un teatro umano*, 1947) he calls this his "first real stage production". He followed it in 1945 with Camus' *Caligula*.

Back in Milan in 1947 he founded the Piccolo Teatro, the first *teatro stabile a gestione pubblica* in Italy. From that date until 1955, Strehler gradually gave up acting and devoted himself to direction, putting on as many as ten productions a year, with a revolutionary eclectic repertoire and relying on a team of actors without "stars" devoted to performing in a fresh contemporary style.

Strehler had already had a first success in Milan in 1945, when for the Benassi company he directed Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra*. At the Piccolo Teatro too he was to impose upon a new public a string of successes including Gorky's *Lower Depths*, which Bertold Brecht later invited him to perform in Berlin: in the first season they performed the first of the plays by Goldoni, *Harlequin Servant of Two Masters*, which in its six versions dominated the repertoire for 40 years, and is acknowledged to be the most representative of all Strehler's works.

In 1955, the Piccolo Teatro began tending towards more realistic and epic works, and Strehler spent longer meditating on the nature of his productions. They again included his favourite, Goldoni's *Villeggiatura* (which I saw him stage at the Comédie Française in the 1978-79 season) and Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera*. He also directed Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, Chekhov's *The Seagull* and Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. During his first 20 years in Milan, Strehler directed 115 productions. One of his greatest successes was another Brecht epic, *The Life of Galileo*, in 1963.

Nineteen-sixty-eight was the year of European student agitation. Leaving Grassi to direct the Piccolo Teatro, Strehler mounted a theatre co-operative, the Gruppo Teatro e Azione. When criticised for giving way to student pressure, Strehler replied: "That was not the reason. I had long become aware of the contradictions that existed between the idea of a popular theatre I had defended since 1945 and a society that had gradually transformed itself beyond recognition." His public was no longer one anaesthetised by a quarter of a century of Italian censorship. This interval was to be a turning-point in the maestro's career.

On returning to the Piccolo Teatro in 1973, Strehler staged *King Lear*, and reprised his Goldoni. He mounted one of his most beautiful operatic spectacles, *The Marriage of Figaro*, at the Paris Opéra, to which he was subsequently invited frequently by the French government. Almost every year he brought a production to the Festival d'automne at the Odéon in Paris: Goldini's *Il Campiello* (given again in 1993 at the Odéon, 20 years after its first creation) and his miraculously poised *Cherry Orchard* by Chekhov.

The Piccolo Teatro had now renounced its civic vocation as "a theatre for the workers at the lowest possible prices" and proclaimed itself an "art theatre". Shakespeare shared the repertory with the two new Brecht productions, *The Threepenny Opera* and *The Good Woman of Sechuan* (1981) while Strehler produced Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra*, *Macbeth* and *Falstaff* at the Scala. In 1983, he directed the Théatre de l'Europe at the Odéon, with Corneille's *Illusion comique*, and the then Minister of Culture, an inspired Jack Lang, appointed him as permanent director.

But in Milan the by now legendary maestro had to face serious charges for possession of cocaine and for alleged misappropriation of European funds, charges he strongly denied. Moreover, he was weary of waiting for his new theatre to be completed, one with 1,000 seats, and in disgust with Italy Strehler went again into exile in Switzerland.

His friend Jack Lang came to his aid by accepting in 1997 the direction of the Piccolo Teatro, and succeeded in bringing Strehler back to stage *Cosi fan tutte* and to work on his next great project, dear to his heart, the *Memoirs* of Goldoni in 1998. But it was not to be. Giorgio Strehler's Goldoni will grace, in 1998, the stage of the Paris Odéon, whose flags flew at half mast on the news of the maestro's death.

– James Kirkup

Strehler: a European through and through

Denver Pyle

Denver Pyle, actor, director and writer: born Bethune, Colorado, 11 May 1920; married (two sons); died Burbank, California 25 December 1997.

One of American's most prolific screen actors, Denver Pyle spent a lifetime – almost 50 years – acting in Westerns, his sharp features augmented in later years by a bushy beard.

He had already appeared on international television in *The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp* (1956-59), and in most of his 100 films, by the time he played the vengeful sheriff in the 1967 blockbuster *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967). The part of Buck Webb in *The Doris Day Show* (1968-70) then signalled his transition from acting lean and mean characters to more benevolent men in tune with their environment, most successfully in *The Life and Times of Grizzly Adams* (1977-78) on television, but he was also on the small screen in the long-running role of Uncle Jesse in *The Dukes of Hazzard* (1979-85).

Born in 1920 in Bethune, a Colorado ranching town of just 40 people, Pyle was named Denver after the capital of that state. He attended Colorado State University, then worked in the oil fields of Texas and Oklahoma before moving to Los Angeles and becoming a page at the American television network NBC. After joining the US Navy during the Second World War, he was wounded in action off Guadalcanal and discharged in 1942.

Pyle: a lifetime of Westerns

Eventually deciding on acting as a career, Pyle made his feature-film début in *Devil Ship* (1947) and quickly established himself as one of Hollywood's great character players. Westerns became his stock-in-trade and he often appeared in four different pictures a year, most of them long-forgotten, with titles such as *The Old Frontier* (1950), *Rough Riders of Durango* (1951), *Goldtown Ghost Riders* (1953) and *I Killed Wild Bill Hickok* (1956).

But they led him to act on television in *Roy Rogers* (1951-64) and as Ben Thompson alongside Hugh O'Brian in the first series of *The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp* (1955-56), the small screen's first "adult" Western, based on the life of a US marshal in the Old West. Pyle also took eight different roles in episodes of *Gunsmoke* (1956-64) and acted Sergeant Murchison in *Code Three* (1957) and Grandpa Tarleton in *Tammy* (1965-66).

In between, he continued in films, the best-known being the over-long and historically inaccurate *The Alamo* (1960), starring John Wayne as Colonel David Crockett, and two pictures directed by John Ford: *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962), starring James Stewart, and the epic *Cheyenne Autumn* (1964), featuring Richard Widmark and Karl Malden in the real-life tale of a half-starved tribe of Cheyenne Indians leaving their Oklahoma reservation to return to their home ground in Wyoming, with the cavalry trying to hamper their trek. Pyle's best film role was as the sheriff in the gangster classic *Bonnie and Clyde*.

A watershed in his career came when he landed the part of Buck Webb in *The Doris Day Show*, originally set on a ranch. When, after two series, the action moved to San Francisco, Pyle's character was written out, but he continued to direct some episodes until 1973. He also played Uncle Duncan in *Here Come the Brides* (1968-70).

Following his starring role in the film *Guardian of the Wilderness* (1976), as a 19th-century conservationist moving to the Yosemite Valley and waging a single-handed battle against the lumberjacks that took him all the way to President Lincoln's White House, Pyle appropriately took the part of Mad Jack in the gentle television series *The Life and Times of Grizzly Adams*. He had not appeared in the original 1974 film but became a regular character, also narrating the programme about James Adams (Dan Haggerty), who left his home and family for the American wilderness after being accused of a crime he did not commit. In the mountains, Adams befriended a grizzly bear, found a friend in the old trader Mad Jack and was watched over by an Indian called Nakuma.

Pyle had previously starred with Haggerty in the film *The Adventures of Frontier Fremont* (1976, retitled *Spirit of the Wild* in Britain), another tale of a man heading for the hills and the simple life. Appropriately, he enjoyed the books of Mark Twain and Jack London.

More raucously, Pyle played Uncle Jesse Duke in *The Dukes of Hazzard*, about two young Southern country cousins in a Dodge Charger keeping one step ahead of a corrupt politician and an inept sheriff. The series, in which the cousins shared a homestead with Uncle Jesse, featured endless car chases and Catherine Bach as the scantily clad Daisy Duke. Pyle, who directed some episodes, also voiced Uncle Jesse in a 1983 cartoon version of the series *The Dukes*, as well as narrating it, and joined the rest of the cast for *The Dukes of Hazzard: Reunion!*, a television film made earlier this year.

His other feature films included another John Wayne picture, *Cahill, United States Marshall* (1973, retitled *Cahill* in Britain) and *Maverick* (1994), starring Mel Gibson and Jodie Foster in an updating of the Western television series of the Fifties and Sixties. His other television guest appearances included roles in *The Dick Van Dyke Show* (1963), *The Andy Griffith Show* (1963), *The Waltons* (1972), *Kung Fu* (1973, 1974), *Murder, She Wrote* (1988), *Dallas* (1990) and *Cybill* (1996).

Less than two weeks before his death, Pyle attended the unveiling of his star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

- Anthony Hayward

Duncan Pryde

Duncan Pryde, trapper, explorer, writer: born 8 June 1937; twice married (one daughter); died 15 November 1997.

Duncan Pryde, who probably knew the Arctic better than any white man of his generation, was in the middle of the massive task of compiling a dictionary of the 26 dialects of the Inuit (or Eskimo) language when he died from cancer.

He was one of five brothers and one sister, who were brought up in various orphanages in Scotland. At the age of 15 he joined the merchant navy, where he learned to be extremely tough and covered himself with lurid tattoos. Forced to resign due to an eye injury, he went to work in a Singer sewing machine factory, and was feeling bored when, aged 18 in 1955, he spotted an advertisement in the *Glasgow Sunday Post* looking for fur traders to go to the far north of Canada for the Hudson's Bay Company.

He spent three years working for the company in northern Manitoba and Ontario, where he learned to speak Cree, but found the life too cushy and asked for a transfer to the Arctic. When he arrived, he was determined to learn to speak Eskimo, and was told by his boss "to learn the Eskimo way, so you will know how they feel about things".

The only dictionary he had access to was a little red book compiled by a Catholic missionary: it was so full of errors that he determined to write his own. He built up word lists and after a few weeks could communicate on a basic level, but reckoned it took him three or four years to become fluent in the language: for example there are over 25 different words for snow, because in a snow environment it is vital to be able to distinguish between the different types.

From Baker Lake he was transferred to the remote Spence Bay, before going to the even more isolated Perry River. Here he had to deal with drunkenness, laziness and murderers. He was much respected and soon adopted the Eskimo way of life, feeling part of one big family; a northern admirer wrote: "Duncan thinks and measures and becomes part of his environment just like an Eskimo." He became involved in wife-exchange and had several children, writing that he could "always find a girl to sleep with. The problem is which one." His obsessive womanising was the one black mark held against him: "He liked girls too much."

He learned to trap, put together a dog-team and travel with dogs, and was taught to harpoon seal and hunt caribou in the ancient Eskimo way. He also saw shamanism and witchcraft at first hand. On various hunting expeditions he was attacked by a polar bear and even more frighteningly was once charged by a grizzly, said to be 10 times more dangerous than a polar bear. He never felt lonely in the Arctic, but equally never lost his love of the bright lights.

After 11 years with the company, Pryde left to work for the Council of the Northwest Territories, a job which involved travelling to all the settlements in the western Arctic by either sled or canoe. It also meant a much-reduced salary; realising he could not live on it, Pryde decided to live off the land with the Eskimos, as a trapper, a pattern of life he adapted to quickly. He was upset by the way the welfare system was run, feeling that it took away any work incentive.

In 1969 he married Georgina Blondin, the Centennial Indian Princess of the Northwest Territories, they had one daughter, Fiona, and lived in Yellowknife where they started a development business. Cliff Michelmore presented a television programme about Pryde in 1970 and *Nunaga* ("my land, my country"), a book about his life in the Arctic was published in 1972 and reprinted by Eland in 1985; whether or not he knew about the reprint will remain a mystery, as the publisher was unable to trace him. Ed Ogle, who wrote a long article about Pryde for *Time* magazine and helped with the book, said that many of his sexual exploits had to be cut as the original publisher was afraid that the book was "too sexy".

In 1975 he resigned from the council and went to the Inupiat University of the Arctic, where he was commissioned to write his dictionary. He had to leave Alaska while his residency status was resolved and lived for a while with his brother Jack in London; he had so adjusted to life in the Arctic that he ate only when hungry, seeming to have lost all perspective of time.

While away he met his second wife, Dawn, and never returned to the Arctic. Instead, Duncan Pryde ended up quietly running a newsagent's shop in the Isle of Wight, working on his dictionary between customers. He completely lost touch with his British family who tried to trace him, believing he was in Germany and never for a moment suspecting that he was living openly with a shop bearing his name. Pryde of Cowes, in the Isle of Wight.

– Sarah Anderson

Pryde: the Eskimo way

MEANINGS OF CHRISTMAS

Jesus the rich kid brings disturbing news

Christ was born in poverty – but only by accident. All the signs are that he was from a middle-class background, argues the Rev Martyn Percy, and the implications of that are rather uncomfortable for most of us.

Our Christmas cards may sanitise and romanticise it, but Jesus was born in a pretty insalubrious place, surrounded by animals and filth, with no one for company except a few rough shepherds. He was, it appears, born poor – a working-class lad from Bethlehem who made good.

Yet closer attention to the Gospels reveals another side to Jesus which is much more comfortable – even middle-class. Remember that Jesus was only born in a stable because the hotels were fully booked. Mary and Joseph could actually afford B&B, so they were clearly not that poor. They had their own transport too. Moreover, when the Wise Men came to visit, they brought quite expensive gifts – gold, frankincense and myrrh have never been cheap.

Ironically, portraiture of Jesus has hidden his true class origins to our detriment. It is actually probably quite important that we see Jesus as being born into a relatively comfortable world. Consider the evidence. Mary and Joseph had the money to flee to Egypt and live abroad for a few years, in order to escape Herod's wrath. Generally, the poor do not have these resources at their disposal. Carpentry was more of a skilled building industry than a basic utility trade: wood was fundamental to the structure of most housing. Indeed Italian scholars have recently retranslated the word used for Joseph's profession – *tekton* – suggesting that he was more of a chartered surveyor than a wood-carver.

The Holy Family could afford a pilgrimage or two. Jesus was educated: well educated, in fact – he almost certainly spoke three languages, Aramaic, Hebrew and probably Greek, and had the financial resources to learn to read and write, and trained as a rabbi. He developed the social skills to be at home with all classes of people – from the poor, to middle class families like that of Mary, Martha and Lazarus, and to wealthy members of the community. Even at his death, he owned an expensive seamless robe, and his body was smuggled away by one of his richer followers, a foreign merchant, to be given a "decent" burial.

Further support for this thesis comes, strangely enough, from Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*, book iii.20. The writer, quoting a first-century source, says that the descendants of Jesus's family were rounded up during a persecution, with a view to their land being confiscated. Eusebius tells us that "they had enough to be self-sufficient". Not really wealthy, but certainly comfortable.

So if Jesus was from a good, Jewish, middle-class background, what are the implications for Christians? Ironically, they are far more disturbing than if he had been born poor. It would appear that Jesus, in his ministry, turned his back on his class roots, and chose poverty. "Blessed are the poor: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." Jesus knew something of both sides of the equation when he said that a rich man would struggle to gain entry into heaven; he assumed the poor would be there by right.

Jesus made friends amongst the poor – sinners, prostitutes, the mentally ill, widows – and he invariably challenged the wealthy over their pride and complacency. The Christian paradigm, in Jesus at least, is "Sell all you have", "Take no gold and silver for the journey", and always bless the beggar, the homeless and the hungry. It's radical stuff, and it's anti-bourgeois. No wonder he got on people's nerves.

The early Christian Socialists – men like F.D. Maurice, Stewart Headlam and John Ludlow – understood that God discriminated for the poor, and shared something of the radical nature of Jesus's chosen social incarnation. They worked with Chartists, radicals and other organisations to bring justice for the working class. They argued for universal suffrage, set up colleges and co-operatives, and laboured for the labourer. It was a costly agenda: Maurice lost a Chair in Theology at King's College London for his trouble. Yet he never lost sight of the imperative: the poor were God's cause, and a truly socialist society would never abandon them.

At Christmastide, we remember the Shepherds and the Wise Men who came bearing gifts for a king. What they found instead was an ordinary family, but in temporary accommodation, struggling with a new baby. It must have been quite a shock. The Wise Men had tried Herod's palace first, but found it was the wrong address. Yet the Gospels record that they still gave their gifts, expensive as they were, and left them at the poor and lowly stable.

In their own way, they too were quite radical, and they throw a question back to us. What gifts will we give to the homeless, the displaced, the poor and the marginalised? The question isn't meant to be a tax bombshell. Yet our response to the coming of Jesus must indeed "cost not less than everything".

Birthdays

Mr Arnold Allen, former chairman, UK Atomic Energy Authority, 73; Mr Gordon Banks, footballer, 60; Professor Sir Roy Calne, surgeon and immunologist, 67; Mr Geraint Davies, controller, BBC Wales, 54; Mr Bo Diddley, singer, composer and guitarist, 69; General Sir David Fraser, former UK representative to NATO, 77; Sir Archibald Hamilton MP, 56; Sir John Houghton, former chief executive, the Meteorological Office, 66; Lord Howick of Glendale, a former managing director, Baring Bros, 60; Dame Rosalinde Hurley, microbiologist, 68; Mr Mark Kaplan, violinist, 44; The Right Rev Peter Nott, Bishop of Norwich, 64; Mr David Prior MP, 43; Sir Alfred Robinson, former High Commissioner in the UK for Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 82; Mr Nick Skelton, show jumper, 40; Lord Terrington, former member of the Stock Exchange, 82; Miss Tracy Ullman, actress and comedienne, 38; Sir David Willcocks, former director, Royal College of Music, 78; Mr Clifford Williams, former associate director, the Royal Shakespeare Company, 71.

Anniversaries

Births: Joseph Rudyard Kipling, author and poet, 1865; Sir Carol Reed, film director, 1906. **Deaths:** Richard, Duke of York, killed, 1460; Grigori Yefimovich Rasputin, Siberian peasant and mystic, murdered, 1916. **On this day:** Karol Wojtyla (later to be Pope John Paul II) became Archbishop of Krakow, Poland, 1963. **Today** is the Feast Day of St Anysia, St Anysius, St Egwin and St Sabinus of Spoleto.

Lectures

British Museum: Lorna Oakes, "Ancient Syria: the city-state of Ebla", 1.15pm.

Changing of the Guard

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at **Horse Guards**, 11am.

BIRTHS

CROSSLEY: Andy and Caroline are delighted to announce the birth at home of Grace Mary on 17 December, a beautiful sister for Joe and Lily.

DEATHS

BELL: Tony (Anthony John) at home on 26 December. Greatly loved husband, father and grandfather. Funeral service at Shiplake Church on Monday 5 January 1998 at 2pm, followed by private cremation. Family flowers only, donations, if desired, to Cancer Research c/o Tomalin & Son, 38 Reading Road, Henley on Thames, RG9 1AG.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

For Gazette, telephone 0171-293 2041.

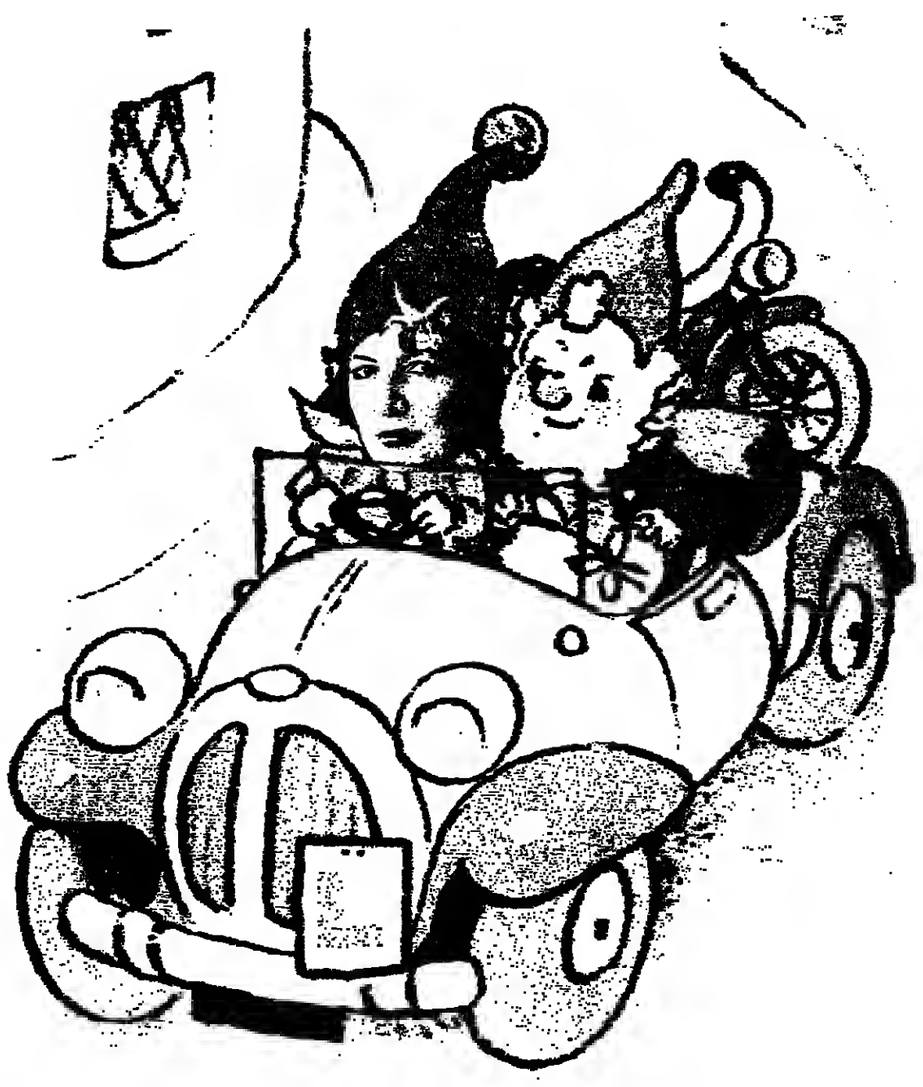
If every other moron could drive, then so could I ...

RESOLUTIONS

THE TIME: 1996

THE PLACE: NORTH LONDON

It was about November when I realised my 1997 New Year's resolution would be the same as it always had been – to learn to drive – says *Suzanne Moore*. I was 37. I was pathetic. I couldn't let it go another year.



My friend recommended this lovely lesbian instructor who understood about people like me. We had a meaningful conversation on the phone. She would love to teach me to drive but she didn't have a car, which seemed a bit of a drawback.

Then I remembered a highly dysfunctional friend who had miraculously been taught to drive. This man was a genius, but could barely walk along the road, and I thought whoever taught him must have something. So I phoned BSM and sought this miracle-worker out.

His name was Chas. He was profoundly depressed. He said something about having to have so many lessons for every year of my life. My life flashed past in driving-lesson years. I would need perhaps a million, but then again, said Chas – for Chas's trick was always to summon up a pupil worse than yourself – "I've got a 17-year-old at the moment. She had 100 lessons and she needs 100 more."

I wanted to talk to Chas about the deep psychological reasons why I could not drive; about my dreams, in which I was driving something like a sewing machine with just one pedal, and then even that would veer out of control. I wanted to tell him that I had explored the issue in therapy and thought it was somehow connected with my mother, who never drove, and that it was pertinent that now she was dead I was about to learn. I felt the urge to tell him that this was the most grown-up thing I had ever done – more grown-up than getting a mortgage, more grown-up than having children, even. Most of all I wanted to tell him that a huge impediment to my driving was that one of my favourite songs was Iggy Pop's "The Passenger", which summons up perfectly that crystalline, coming-down feeling of being driven through a city late at night when everything passes slowly by the window. For despite all the boy-racer mythology in my heart, I felt that there was something deeply cool about being driven rather than driving.

I didn't say any of these things. Instead I blurted out: "You have no idea of how useless I am," and refused to get into the driving seat. "I'm not doing *that* on the first lesson."

Chas gently coaxed me out of his seat and into mine, promising me that I wouldn't have to do anything I didn't feel ready for. I confessed that many years before I had had several bad experiences with driving instructors. One used to tell me that changing the gears was like making love, which I never understood. One used to smell of whisky, and just yell furiously at me. Another used only to let me play about with a cardboard steering wheel, and never made me do any actual driving.

Chas nodded. Chas could never believe how many bad driving instructors there were out there. He took his job very seriously. So seriously that he was made pretty miserable by it. He had, he explained, put on lots of weight since becoming a driving instructor, and he really wanted to do something else. Every lesson he would fantasise about a different job. Sometimes he wanted to be a cameraman. Some days a journalist. Sometimes a builder. Sometimes he wanted to run a restaurant. Anything, really, but be a driving instructor. I couldn't blame him.

While I listened avidly to his existential search for meaning, he knew and I knew that I never really listened whenever he started talking about the clutch, traffic lights, road markings, and all the rest of it. I pretended to listen, but something just happens to me when people start talking about cars, which I have never taken any interest in. "Do you know what kind of car you are driving?" Chas asked me one day in the nearest thing he ever had to a fit of temper.

"Er ... blue?"

Meanwhile, all my friends made encouraging noises, except the very close ones who thought that I should never be allowed behind a wheel. "It will change your life." "It will be so much easier for shopping." "You have to drive when you have children." These things I have never understood, either. You don't have to be a pilot to go on a plane, yet there is a massive conspiracy about cars. My children were happy and healthy despite a non-driving mother. We walked, or got buses or cabs. It was fine. I never felt particularly handicapped, but I realised that others regarded me as such.

No, I was learning to drive for myself. It was the final frontier. The ultimate in adulthood. If every other moron could drive, then so could I.

Chas was concerned that I take *my* test before the new-fangled theory test came in. He didn't have much confidence in my ability to pass a written one. "It would involve you having to read some books," he said witheringly.

By now, I was semi-driving. Well, steering. Chas had his feet on the pedals and we would chat away. It was strange being taught something and not being invited to give an opinion. There was no point arguing with Chas about how to change gear or reverse. There was one way to do it and that was it. Driving, I realised, does not involve much space for personal expression. This was not an interpretative skill: no one cared about what you thought you were doing. You just had to do as you were told. All very difficult for someone as awkward as me.

By the day of the test I had secured so much pharmaceutical help that I could have flown to the moon. Beta-blockers from my doctor, some ancient Valium from Thailand, Librium from my sympathetic builder. When the driving test man announced, "Hello Miss Moore, I'm Mr Much", I cackled hysterically for about 10 minutes at this frightful joke about my name, until I realise that Mr Much was in fact this little man's real moniker.

"When you are calmer, Miss Moore," said Mr Much, "perhaps we could walk to the car."

"Ah, the car." I was confident I'd recognise the car. After all, it had a huge BSM sign on top. As we walked out of the test centre, I could feel the drugs beginning to take hold. I was breathing deeply; I was an oasis of calm: I would float away in the car, cruising smoothly into driving heaven.

Suddenly I realised that every bloody car outside the test centre had a BSM sign on top. For what seemed like hours I wandered about trying the key in different locks, with embarrassing alarms going off, until, as if by magic, it fitted one.

I got in and went through the drills that Chas had made so much of. Something to do with initials and seat belts and mirrors and things. BSE or BSM or MSM or something.

Then I heard a gentle tap on the windows. It was Mr Much. I had not let him into the car.

From there on in, things got worse.

Chas was waiting patiently for me when I came back. "I couldn't find the car," I cried. Dredging up yet another story about someone more inept than me, Chas sighed: "But you did find it in the end, didn't you? I had a man once ... well, after 20 minutes the inspector came back on his own. The guy couldn't find the car and he just made a run for it ..."

Chas drove me home. There would be another test. And there was. And another, which I somehow got through.

So, yes, I had done it. I had a driving licence.

This is the part when I am supposed to say what a difference it has made to my life. But I can't say it has. I still hate cars, and those who go on about them, I am still amazed that everybody follows all the rules, that more people don't die.

I still get cabs, because there has never been any contest between drinking and driving. I would rather sit on a bus and read than sit in a traffic jam listening to crap radio. I would rather be asleep on a train than dodging down a motorway. In short, I am not a convert. But I stuck to my resolution. I did the thing that for some daft reason signified adulthood to me. I became some kind of grown-up, supposedly more in control than I was before. And now I have the proof of that, it means I can be as immature as I like.

***Tomorrow:* novelist Rachel Cusk on the passing of time**

Spinderella

A People's Pantomime in Two Acts (of Parliament) by Debbie Barham

Cast
Tony Blair as Spinderella, the Principled Boy
Peter Mandelson as the Pantomime Dome
Gordon Brown as the Principal Bore
Harriet Harman and Clare Short as Blair's Babes in the Wood (non-speaking roles. Preferably)
William Hague as the Little Tory who never grew up
Mister Blobby as John Prescott
Portillo, Rifkind, Forsyth & Hamilton as the Lost Seat Boys
Christine Hamilton as the back end of a cow
A man dressed in women's clothes (to get on the women-only shortlist)
Paddy Ashdown as a Wishee Washee Liberal
Ken Coates and Hugh Kerr as the ugly ministers (non-supporting roles)
And special guest: Humphrey the cat as Puss
Plus: Several comedy U-turns

Scene: New Britain – a Fantasy Land.
'Spinderella', a pitiful figure, is busy sweeping issues under the carpet.
Narrator: Our pantomime starts back in May '97
As Britain wakes up in a New Labour heaven
Even in Sport – we get to the hall
And the future looks rosy (though not red at all).
But soon comes December. A sorrowful sight
Young Spinders is sobbing – let's hear of his plight
Principled boy: Boo-hoo! How I wish I was off at some party
Hanging around with the pop glitterati
"Jamming" with Liam and Noel (my mates!)
Harman (from the wings): ...And not turning up to important debates.
Principled boy: But this is a Grimm Tale – no fairy story.
Still – at least I'm not tainted by sleaze like the Tories.
Narrator: When suddenly – poof! In a thick cloud of smoke, comes:
Principled boy: My Blairy Godmother?
Narrator: That Ecclestone bloke.
Bernie: Oi, Tone! Here's a million to win you some voters.
If you let me advertise fags on my motors.
The Principled Boy nods his head and executes a quick pirouette.
Narrator: But over this issue our hero has blundered
And Bernie gets all of his money refunded.
Spinders unhappily sweeps up the embers
Scorned even by his own Cabinet members.
Rebel rump (of Pantomime Stalking-Horse): Ha!
Where are your party faithful NOW?
Principled boy: They're behind me!
Ken Coates, Hugh Kerr, and the boys and girls in the audience: Oh, no, they aren't!
Principled boy: Oh, yes, they are!
Narrator: But away from this highly cerebral debate
Down on the farm – turks a sinister fate ...

Scene: a farm.
Farmer Twanky is in the pigsty attending to a litter of newly arrived EC subsidy application forms. Jack, the agriculture minister, approaches with a pantomime cow.
Jack: Tell me – is this your 'eifer?
Farmer Twanky: Aye, that be moi Daisy.
Jack: Slaughter her, man! She's clearly gone crazy.
Give up the livestock and grow vegetation.
Here are some beans as your compensation.
The Pantomime Cow is slaughtered, culled and deboned.
Cow: (cheekily) Moooo! I've always wanted to be "well hung"! (winks at audience)
Jack: Now that kind of humour I cannot condone.
Please take that joke back! It's far too near the bone.
Farmer Twanky: (sadly) Alas, alack, poor cow of mine.
Now just like Blair – she's got no spine!
Narrator: But old Farmer Twanky now makes a discovery
His handful of beans are ... the seeds of recovery!
Farmer Twanky plants the beans. They do sod all.
Farmer Twanky: Not a single green shoot! This could prove to be tragic.
Gordon, the Principal Bore: Well what are you waiting for – some sort of magic?
Narrator: So Spinders is down to his final tap-top
And it looks like his party is in for the chop
(The chop being certified boneless, of course,
And not from a cow but a pantomime horse).
"I just want somebody to love me" he pleads.
Gordon: Kiss a frog!
Principled Boy: What, suck up to those Euro MPs!
No – what I need now isn't more hocus-pocus
Find me a Group that'll help me to Focus...!
Exeunt Omnes to the Think-Tank.

Scene: a Castle in the Air (Tory Party HQ)
Hague and his wife, Fe-Fi-Fo-Ffion, are sleeping (in separate beds). Two new Labour MPs in stripy sweaters creep in on tiptoe. They are Blair's Ruthless Henchmen, or Banned-Its.
Narrator: Does Willie wake up? No, he just keeps snoring!
It's lucky political life is so boring ...
The robbers make off with Hague's manifesto. Enter Murdoch, a newspaper seller.
Murdoch: Mirror, Mirror, hot off the press
Whose is the party in distress?
The Principled Boy begins to sob.
Murdoch: Read all about it! A Golden Nest Egg
More government scandal!
Principled boy: Don't publish. I beg!
Murdoch: Geoffrey Robinson Crusoe is stranded tax-free
On an island that's – handily – way out to sea.
Principled Boy: If only I'd done that ...
Narrator: Our hero now curses
Principled boy: ... I might now be able to pay for some nurses.
Spinders glumly counts out the few beans left in his party coffers.
Principled Boy: Oh woe! I'm as poor as an unmarried mum ...
Narrator: But Aladdin Fayed with his Magic Lump Sum
Appears – like a genie, straight out of thin air!
Aladdin Fayed: You're in luck. I've a few f***in' quid I can spare.
One wave of my wad – and you'll be a rich geezer
... If you just grant me a full f***ing visa.
Narrator: Now it seems as though things really CANNOT get worse
(Meaning New Labour's fortunes, not simply this verse).
When Tony espies an enormous erection
A Dome – with a coating of Teflon protection!
Spinders calls Peter Mandini into No 10 and demands an explanation.
Mandini: (*slaps thigh*) It'll bring Britain credit!
Narrator: Mandini expounds.
Principled Boy: To the tune ....
Narrator: – laments Spinders
Principled Boy: ... of millions of pounds!
Spinders sends Mandini away in shame.
Narrator: Spin again, Mandelson.
Potential Mayor of London Town ...
Principled Boy: (*slaps head*): Doh! If ONLY I still came across as Prince Charming.
Now I'm seen as dishonest and – oh NO! It's ... Harman!
Enter Harman, a traditional pantomime villain – to boos and hisses from all children in the audience. She has large, pendulous comedy breasts, and is evidently in need of more support. She is in hot pursuit of single Mother Goose and Snow White (whose child benefit form claims that she is the sole guardian of seven minors).
Harman: Fee, fi, fo, fum
I smell the blood of a single mum!
Be she disabled or just unwed
I'll grind her down to save some bread!
Exit Harman, laughing maniacally, to the DSS, but she leaves behind a glass slipper.
Principled Boy: Aha! Should this slipper fit anyone's gob
I promise – that person is out of a job.
Narrator: Blair's Babes in the Wood are now sorely afeard
But hark! Who's this gnome with a gingery beard?
A hairy homunculus this way now ventures
'Tis Cook – and seven New Labour frontbenchers!
Blair's Babes in the Wood: There's Hapless, and Sleazy, and Spin Doc and Grumpy, Sleepy and Bashful – who likes rumpy-pumpy ...
Principled Boy: But where is the seventh? Is Dopey not here?
Sleazy: No – he's with his son flogging druggies some gear.
Principled Boy (dolefully): I thought cash for questions was stupid and rash.
But NOW we've got chaps facing questions for HASH!
Principled Boy (breaks down in tears):
Just like Sleeping Beauty ... my chances of winning Support – have been wrecked
Omnes: ... by a prick and some spinning!

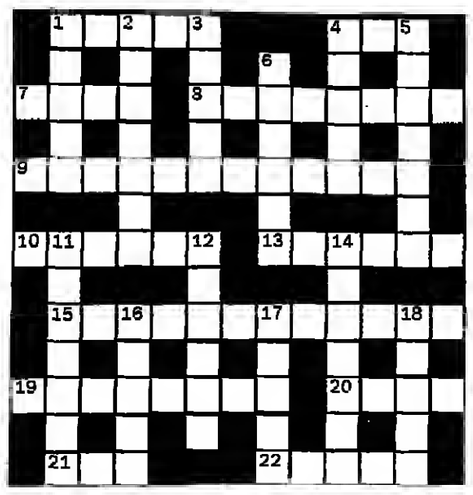
Exeunt omnes disgruntled party members, pursued by a Blair. Applause from young conservatives. Lights and popularity go down. Curtains (for the Government?)

Coming Next Year! Don't miss... Gerry Adams and Mo Mowlam in the thigh-slapping, arms-swapping extravaganza, 'Jack-in-the-Peace Talks' (Not suitable for children. Performance subject to last-minute change or cancellation)

GAMES

CONCISE CROSSWORD

No.3494 Tuesday 30 December



ACROSS
1 Attack on king (5)
4 No longer available (3)
7 Transparent mineral used as glass substitute (4)
8 System of letters (8)
9 Not for attribution (3,3,6)
10 Surgical instrument (6)
13 Attempt (6)
15 Extremely impressive (3-9)
19 Ear-splitting (8)
20 Notion (4)
21 Make fun of (3)
22 Courage (5)

DOWN
1 Rock face (5)
2 Flexible (7)
3 Playing card (5)
4 New Zealand university (5)
5 Cricketer (7)
6 Orb (6)
11 Astonishing (7)
12 Ball game (6)
14 Shoer of horses (7)
16 Before due time (5)
17 Heathen (5)
18 Female relative (5)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

ACROSS: 1 Pose, 4 Taste (Post-haste), 9 Outdo, 10 Rat-trap, 11 Recorder, 12 Shin, 13 Wall paintings, 17 Wane, 18 Fearless, 21 Flemish, 22 Irate, 23 Tulip, 24 Hate. DOWN: 2 Optic, 3 Ego-trip, 4 Three-line whip, 5 Sett, 6 Earthen, 7 Sorrow, 8 Spin, 14 Lenient, 15 Tarnish, 16 System, 17 Wife, 19 Enact, 20 Bill.

CHESS: WILLIAM HARTSTON

Nigel Short self-destructed in the opening game of his world championship quarter-final against Nigel Short. Thanks to some clever play in the opening (this 6...Nf6! is a big improvement on the natural cxd4) he gained an early initiative and turned this into a clear space advantage on the Q-side.

When Black had established a pawn chain at a5, b4 and e3, and had his bishop firmly cemented on d4, Adams could only wait for his opponent to launch an attack with f5. Both players manoeuvred their pieces to be ready for that advance, but when it happened, it looked as though Black was well on top.

Short must have planned well in advance to meet 31.Ne4 by sacrificing the exchange, but it did not turn out as well as he had hoped. After 35.f4, the position became very loose. Short won the pawn on e2, but it was Adams's e-pawn that won the game in Short's time-trouble.

White: Adams	Black: Short
1 e4 e5	22 b3 Bd4
2 Nc3 c6	23 Rab1 c3
3 Nf3 a6	24 Bxa6 Rxa6
4 g3 b5	25 Ne4 f4-f1
5 Bg2 Bb7	26 Nc3 g6
6 d4 Nf6	27 Re1 Re6
7 Bg5 cxd4	28 Rbd1 Re5
8 Nxd4 h6	29 Kg2 f5
9 Bxf6 Qxf6	30 exf5 gxf5
10 f4-f1 Nc6	31 Ne4 Rxe4
11 Nxc6 dxc6	32 hxe4 Qxe4
12 Qe2 e5	33 Qb7 Rf7
13 a4 b4	34 Qb8+ Kh7
14 Nh1 a5	35 f4 Qa2
15 Qe3 Bd6	36 fxe5 Qxc2+
16 Nd2 Qe7	37 Kh5 f4
17 Nh3 e5	38 e6 Qf5+
18 Nd2 Ba6	39 g4 Qd5
19 Rfd1 e4	40 Rd3 Rf6
20 Bf1 Bc5	41 Qe7+ resigns
21 Qf3 Qe6	

CHOICE: MUSICAL

The Slow Drag, Whitehall Theatre, London SW1 (0171-369 1735)

Like those expensive Christmas presents you wish you'd received, some of the best things come in small packages. Splashy *Chicago* may be stealing everyone's attention but down the road there is this rather hot little number with no big sets, flashy production numbers or tap-dancing cast of millions. Instead you get a fascinating, real-life story in the hands of three excellent performers and a really smart jazz line-up. Sax player Johnny Christmas builds a successful career with his wife, June, fronting his band. Only trouble is, nobody knows that Johnny is a woman. Christopher Colquhoun is marvellously cool crooning and leaping over a grand piano, Kim Criswell scorches the hairs on the back of your neck singing her heart out, and Liza Sadovy blows a mean horn, sings like a guy and does a real number as Johnny. The show asks more questions than it answers, but at 90 minutes barely outstays its welcome. Come on down.

David Benedict

هكذا من الاصل

DANCE

Skating far too close to the edge

Tales of Beatrix Potter; Peter and the Wolf; Les Patineurs
Royal Ballet, Royal Festival Hall

We always knew that the London Festival Ballet (now English National Ballet) were performing marvels at their old home. With no flying tower, and a stage like a shelf, the Royal Festival Hall (which was built purely for orchestral concerts) is a dance director's nightmare – as the Royal Ballet is now discovering.

Matthew Hart's charming *Peter and the Wolf* was excellently danced by the Royal Ballet School and didn't suffer particularly from the transfer, but the lack of space can become painfully apparent whenever existing work is shoehorned on to it. The graceful circuits of the ice made by Ashton's *chassé*-ing dancers in his 1937 masterpiece *Les Patineurs* may have been crafted on the cramped 30ft stage of the old Sadler's Wells, but in this new, foreshortened site the circles are squashed into ellipses.

Ashton's seamless exits and entrances were let down last Tuesday by some perilously close brushes with the trellis-work. However, the dancers responded manfully to the challenge of fitting the steps into the space available. Miyako Yoshida and Deborah Bull were styly witty as the two show-offs in blue. Yoshida nipped through her *fouettés* with much of the speed and twice the charm of any figure-skater you could name.

Equally slippery was Tetsuya Kumakawa's Blue Boy. The audience was delighted with his silky pirouettes and bold cabrioles. Unfortunately, so was he – but perhaps a little cockiness is not inappropriate when portraying the supercharged vanity of the solo skating virtuoso.

Such individuality is largely dispensed with in the second number in the double-bill: Ashton's *Tales of Beatrix Potter*. The work was successfully translated from the 1971 feature film

LOUISE LEVENE

to a live-action fluff-fest in 1992 and has been tormenting dancers and selling tickets ever since. On Tuesday, a last-minute cast change was announced, telling us that one of Squirrel Nutkin's fat, furry chums had been replaced. Trust me: your own mother wouldn't know you through that amount of fur fabric and after 15 minutes' dancing in that heat, you'd have forgotten your own name anyway. I'd selected a lightweight black crêpe number for the evening and I found the Festival Hall sweltering – happily I wasn't wearing my padded, all-in-one squirrel suit.

The over-long 65-minute production has had to be altered considerably to fit its temporary home. The Two Bad Mice now take possession of a bungalow rather than a magnificent, two-storey Victorian villa, and all of the backcloths have to be tracked on from the wings like so many Swish curtains, with the result that Oliver Symons's spirited Mrs Tiggywinkle runs on against a rather creased approximation of the Lake District. The point where two curtains join is occasionally held in place by a rather obvious list.

The dancers began their stint of 14 *Potters* with commendable energy. Peter Abeggelen, Hubert Essakow and Joshua Tuifua put in some chasteningly nimble pointework as Pigling Bland and friends, and all have tendonitis to look forward to in the New Year. William Trevitt was in a fever of fuss and virtuosity as Jeremy Fisher, and Natalie McCann waddled her way sweetly through Jemima Puddleduck. They may not actually spend a week on a farm in preparation for each role, but they do apparently aim to do all the appropriate facial expressions beneath Rostislav Doboujinsky's masks. All the more heartbreaking when you reflect that at least half the audience is probably applauding the suit.

'Tales of Beatrix Potter' is in a double bill with either 'Les Patineurs' or 'Peter and the Wolf' at the Royal Festival Hall, SBC, London SE1, until Saturday. Tickets: 0171-304 4000

Roll over, Torvill and Dean: the Royal Ballet takes to the ice (and narrowly avoids the trellis-work) in an unduly cramped revival of Sir Frederick Ashton's 60-year-old skating caper

Photograph: Laurie Lewis

THEATRE

Not much of a body... but great parts

Jez Butterworth's debut drama 'Mojo' took the Royal Court by storm in 1995, scooped an Olivier Award and has already been made into a movie, featuring Harold Pinter no less. *Phil Johnson* watched its first out-of-town staging, at the Bristol Old Vic.

Reservoir Dogs meets *Espresso Bongo*, or *Absolute Beginners* meets *Glengarry Glen Ross*? Whichever way you slice it, Jez Butterworth's tale of small-time Soho gangsters in the era of pop music's infancy boils down to a beguiling game of theatrical cross-talk in which, while the sum may mean less than its parts (and it does), the stage is held convincingly throughout and the machine gun rat-tat-tat of the characters' heroic swearing more than takes the day.

First seen at the Royal Court in the summer of 1995 (and now re-worked into a soon-to-be-released movie), *Mojo* is receiving its British regional premiere in a new production (by Ian Hastings) that proves quite triumphantly that Butterworth's debut drama has the legs to sustain a life beyond its initial modish success. That another set of legs – severed from their body – are on stage in a dustbin for much of the action only adds to the piquancy of the piece.

With the benefit of a couple of years' critical perspective, the world of *Mojo* now seems satisfyingly familiar. The gangsters are out of Tarantino; the milieu is Colin MacInnes given a hefty amphetamine spin; and the dialogue is a cocktail of Mamet's *Chicago* mixed with the home-brewed Lucozade of good old cockney curses. All those Fifties British-movie clichés of zombie-like teenagers shaken into a trance by American rock 'n' roll live again in the figures of coffee-bar teen-idol Silver Johnny and the monstrous Baby, the son of sawn-off club owner Ezra (whose legs are in the bin). As far as the plot goes, Silver Johnny has been kidnapped by a George Raft-like Mafia encroacher, and the staff of Ezra's Soho club are thus in a bit of a pickle. As in *Reservoir Dogs*, *Macbeth* or even *Waiting for Godot*, most of the real action occurs off-stage, and what remains is the cross-talk. And as in those illustrious examples, it's enough to hold the attention.

Fittingly, it's the acting that takes the biscuit. As the hopeless heavy, Potts, William Ely gives a bravura performance of quite outstanding quality. Initially holding the stage alone with his spar, Sweets (played with a brilliantly edgy comic force by Justin Shelvin), Ely plays the sweaty, speed-fuelled no-hoper to the hilt. Like the Three Stooges as re-worked by *The Fast Show*, Ely and Shelvin together make up a mad double-act – Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in loafers – whose energy carries the play beyond an often sorely tried suspension of disbelief. As Baby, Anton Saunders starts fitfully – basically, he's bonkers – but grows throughout to become a convincingly chilling protagonist. Ross Boatman, as the Kray-like gangster Mickey, is perhaps less scary than the role demands, but the power of the ensemble is sufficient to see the play through.

Ultimately, perhaps, *Mojo* represents a triumph of incidental detail over the long view. For future generations of teenagers cramming the exam text, there's little sociological detail about either the Fifties or the Nineties to get their teeth into. But if, in the end, the resolution of the plot counts for less than the brilliance of the dialogue that leads up to it, that's fair enough: Butterworth has created a language for the theatre that teems with powerful images, both verbal and visual. *Mojo* might be a three-minute single rather than an album, but that in itself is a recommendation. It's one hell of a riff; the concept can come later.

To 17 Jan, New Vic Studio. Tickets: 0117-987 7877

LONDON CINEMAS

ABC BAKER STREET *(0171-935 9772)* ⊖ Baker St **Home Alone 3** to Thu 1 15pm, 3 30pm, 6 50pm (not Wed) **L.A. Confidential** to Thu 6 05pm (not Wed) ***The Tango Lesson*** *to Thu 1 25pm, 3 40pm,* 6 15pm, 8.35pm (not Wed)

ABC PANTON STREET (0171-930 0631) ⊖ Picc Circ **The Game** to Wed 2 20pm 5 20pm 8 10pm (not Wed) **L.A. Confidential** to Wed 2pm, 5pm, 8pm (not Wed) **Mrs Brown** 1.20pm, 3 40pm, 6pm (not Wed), 8 25pm (not Wed) **Wilde** to Wed 1 10pm 3 30pm 6pm (not Wed), 8 20pm (not Wed)

ABC PICCADILLY (0171-437 3561) ⊖ Picc Circ **Chasing Amy** to Thu 1 15pm, 3.25pm, *5.55pm, 8 35pm (not Wed)* **B.L. Jane** *to Thu* 1.40pm, 5 40pm 8 20pm (not Wed)

ABC SHAFTESBURY AVENUE (0171-836 6279) ⊖ Leic Sq **Chasing Amy** to Thu 2 15pm, 5 15pm (not Wed) 8 15pm (not Wed) **Wilde** to Thu 1 05pm 3 30pm 5 55pm (not Wed), 8 35pm (not Wed)

ABC SWISS CENTRE (0171-439 4470) ⊖ Leic Sq **L'Appartement** to Thu 1 10pm *3.40pm, 6 10pm, 8 40pm (not Wed)* **Lawn Dogs** to Thu 1 10pm 3 30pm 6 20pm 8 *50pm (not Wed)* ***Marius Et Jeannette*** to Thu 1pm 3 15pm, 6pm, 8 55pm (not Wed) ***Ma Vie En Rose*** to Thu 1 10pm 3 10pm 5 10pm, 7 10pm, 9 10pm (not Wed)

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD (0171-636 6148) ⊖ Tott Ct Rd **Spiceworld - The Movie** 1 15pm, 3 25pm, 5 35pm 7.45pm, 9 55pm (not Wed) **Tomorrow Never Dies** 1.10pm 3 50pm, 6 30pm, 9 10pm (Wed) **Welcome To Sarajevo** 1 35pm 4 05pm, 7pm, 9.30pm (Wed)

BARBICAN CINEMA (0171-382 7000) ⊖ Moorgate **The Borrowers** 2 30pm (not Thu) **Spiceworld - The Movie** 4 15pm 6 30pm, 8 30pm **Tomorrow Never Dies** 3pm, 6pm 8 40pm

CHELSEA CINEMA (0171-351 3742) ⊖ Sloane Square ***The Tango Lesson*** to Thu 2pm, 4 15pm 6 30pm 8 50pm

CLAPHAM PICTURE HOUSE (0171-498 2242) ⊖ Clap Comn **The Borrowers** to Thu 1pm (not Thu) 3pm (not Thu), 5pm, 7pm (not Wed) **The Full Monty** Tue 12 45pm 2 45pm, 7 30pm, 9 30pm (Wed/Thu) 1 30pm (Wed) 3 30pm (Wed) 7.30pm (Thu) **L.A. Confidential** to Thu 4 45pm (not Wed), 9pm (not Wed) **Starship Troopers** Thu 9 20pm ***Tomorrow Never Dies*** to Thu 1 45pm (not Thu) 4 15pm 6 45pm (not Wed), 9 15pm (not Wed)

CURZON MAYFAIR (0171-369 1720) ⊖ Green Park **Tomorrow Never Dies** to Thu *1pm,* 3 30pm 6pm, 8 30pm (not Wed)

CURZON PHOENIX (0171-369 1721) ⊖ Leic Sq **Keep The Aspidistra Flying** to Thu 1 15pm, 6 15pm **Shooting Fish** to Thu 3 45pm 9 30pm (not Wed)

CURZON WEST END (0171-439 4805) ⊖ Leic Sq/Tottenham Court Road **It's A Wonderful Life** 2 40pm, 5 30pm 8 15pm *(not Wed)*

ELEPHANT & CASTLE CORONET (0171-703 4968) ⊖ Elephant & Castle **Allen: Resurrection** to Wed 8 40pm **The Borrowers** to Thu 1pm 4 50pm **George Of The Jungle** to Thu 1 30pm, 4pm, 6 20pm **Spiceworld - The Movie** to Thu 2 45pm 6 40pm, 8 50pm **Tomorrow Never Dies** to Thu 2pm, 4 30pm, 8 25pm

EMPIRE LEICESTER SQ (0171-437 1234) ⊖ Leic Sq **The Full Monty** 1pm (not Thu), 3 30pm 6pm 8 30pm *(not Wed)* **Seven Years In Tibet** 12noon (not Thu) 3pm, 6 15pm (not Wed) 9 20pm (not Wed) **Spiceworld - The Movie** 11 30am (not Thu) 1 50pm 4 15pm 6 40pm 9 05pm (not Wed)

GATE NOTTING HILL (0171-727 4043) ⊖ Notting Hill Gate **Kitchen** 1 55pm 4 15pm 6 35pm 8 55pm *(not Wed)*

HAMMERSMITH VIRGIN (0181-970 6086) ⊖ Hammersmith **Allen: Resurrection** Tue 9 30pm **The Borrowers** 12 10pm, 2 10pm 4 20pm 6 50pm **Home Alone 3** 12noon 2 15pm 4 40pm (not Thu), 7pm (not Thu) **I Know What You Did Last Summer** Tue/Thu 8 50pm **Spiceworld - The Movie** 12noon 2 20pm 4 40pm, 7 10pm 9 30pm (not Wed) **Starship Troopers** Thu 12 20pm, 3pm 6pm, 9pm **Tomorrow Never Dies** Tue/Thu 12 30pm 3 20pm 6 10pm 9pm (not Wed) *Wed 4 30pm 7pm 9 15pm*

ICA CINEMA (0171-930 3647) ⊖ Char Cross **Close-Up** 5pm 7pm 9pm **Fellini: A Director's Notebook** Thu 6 20pm 8 20pm **I Vitelloni** to Wed 6 30pm **La Strada** to Wed 8 30pm

METRO (0171-437 0757) ⊖ Picc Circ **Kiss Me Guido** Tue 2pm 4 15pm 6 30pm, 8 45pm **Persons Unknown** Tue 3 30pm 8 30pm **Under The Skin** Tue 1pm, 6pm

THE MINEMA (0171-369 1721) ⊖ Knightsbridge **It's A Wonderful Life** to Thu 3pm 6 30pm 9pm (not Wed)

NOTTING HILL CORONET (0171-727 6705) ⊖ Notting Hill Gate **Tomorrow Never Dies** 3pm, 6pm 8 30pm

ODEON CAMDEN TOWN (0181-315 4259) ⊖ Camd Town **Allen: Resurrection** 9 30pm (not Wed) **Cop Land** 9 15pm (not Wed/Thu) **George Of The Jungle** 12 15pm 2 20pm 4 45pm, 7pm (not Wed/Thu) **Hercules** 1 10pm **Home Alone 3** 1 15pm 3 45pm, 6 30pm (not Wed) **L.A. Confidential** Tue/Thu 8 40pm **One Night Stand** 3 45pm, 6 30pm *(not Wed)* ***Spiceworld - The Movie*** 12 10pm, 2 25pm 4 40pm 6 55pm (not Wed) 9 20pm (not Wed) ***Starship Troopers*** Thu 1pm 3 30pm **Tomorrow Never Dies** 12 45pm 3 30pm 6 15pm (not Wed) 9 15pm (not Wed)

ODEON HAYMARKET (0181-315 4216) ⊖ Picc Circ **Regeneration** 2pm 6 10pm (not Wed) 8 45pm (not Wed)

ODEON KENSINGTON (0181-315 4214) ⊖ High St Ken **Allen: Resurrection** 9 40pm *(not Wed)* ***The Borrowers*** 12 25pm 2 45pm 5 05pm **Cop Land** 7 15pm **George Of The Jungle** 12noon 2 10pm 4 20pm, 6 30pm (not Thu) **Hercules** 12 15pm **Home Alone 3** 1 35pm 4 10pm, 6 [illegible] (not) **I Know What You Did Last Summer** 2 40pm 5 05pm, 7 30pm, 9 55pm (not Wed) **L.A. Confidential** Tue 9 15pm **Seven Years In Tibet** 9 15pm (not Wed) **Spiceworld - The Movie** 12 15pm, 2 35pm 5pm 7 20pm, 9 40pm (not Wed) **Starship Troopers** Thu 6 30pm, 9 30pm ***Tomorrow Never Dies*** 1pm, 3 50pm, 6 40pm 9 30pm (not Wed)

ODEON LEIC SQ (0181-315 4215) ⊖ Leic Sq **Tomorrow Never Dies** 12 25pm, 3.05pm 5 50pm (not Wed), 8 35pm (not Wed)

ODEON MARBLE ARCH (0181-315 4216) ⊖ Marble Arch **Allen: Resurrection** 8.55pm (not Wed) **The Borrowers** 12 15pm 2 20pm, 4 25pm, 6 35pm *(not Wed)* **Cop Land** Tue 8 30pm **George Of The Jungle** 11 40am, 1 50pm, 4 05pm 6 15pm *(not Wed/Thu)* **Home Alone 3** 11 35am, 1 55pm, 4.15pm, 6 35pm *(not Wed)* **L.A. Confidential** 8 45pm (not Wed) **Spiceworld - The Movie** 1pm, 3 35pm 6 10pm *(not Wed)* 8 40pm *(not Wed)* **Starship Troopers** Thu 6pm, 8 55pm ***Tomorrow Never Dies*** *12 20pm, 3pm,* 6 05pm (not Wed), 9pm (not Wed)

ODEON MEZZANINE (0181-315 4215) ⊖ Leic Sq **Seen** 2 35pm, 4 35pm, 6 40pm (not Wed), 9 05pm (not Wed) **Face/Off** 2 15pm 5 20pm (not Wed), 8 20pm (not Wed) **The Full Monty** 12 50pm, 2 05pm, 2 55pm 4 05pm 5 10pm (not Wed), 6 10pm (not Wed), 7 10pm (not Wed), 8 20pm (not Wed) 9 10pm (not Wed) **The Tango Lesson** 2 15pm 4 20pm, 6 30pm (not Wed), 8 45pm (not Wed)

ODEON SWISS COTTAGE (0181-315 4220) ⊖ Swiss Cott **Allen: Resurrection** to Thu 8 45pm (not Wed) **The Borrowers** to Thu 12 30pm, 2 30pm, 4 30pm (not Wed) 6 30pm (not Wed) **Cop Land** Tue 8 35pm **George Of The Jungle** to Thu 1 20pm 3 45pm 6 15pm (not Wed) **Home Alone 3** to Thu 12 40pm 3 10pm, 5 55pm (not Wed) **I Know What You Did Last Summer** 1pm, 3 35pm 6 05pm (not Wed), 8.40pm (not Wed) **L.A. Confidential** to Thu 8 15pm (not Wed) **Spiceworld - The Movie** 1pm, 3 30pm 6pm (not Wed), 8 30pm (not Wed) **Starship Troopers** Thu 6pm, 8 35pm ***Tomorrow Never Dies*** *12 10pm, 3pm,* 5 50pm (not Wed), 8 40pm (not Wed)

ODEON WEST END (0181-315 4221) ⊖ Leic Sq **Allen: Resurrection** 1 15pm, 2pm (not Thu) 3 40pm 4 40pm (not Thu) 6 10pm (not Wed) 7 10pm (not Wed/Thu), 8 45pm (not Wed) 9 45pm (not Wed/Thu) **Starship Troopers** Thu 1 45pm, 4 55pm, 7 45pm

PEPSI IMAX CINEMA (0845-600 0505) ⊖ Picc Circ **Across The Sea Of Time - A New York Adventure (3D)** Tue, Thu 11 30am 1 30pm 3 30pm, 5 30pm, 7 30pm, 9 30pm also Fri 10 30am, 12 30pm 2.30pm 4 30pm 6 30pm, 8 30pm, 10 30pm, Wed 10 30am 12 30pm 2 30pm 4 30pm, 6 30pm & 8 30pm **Beavers** Fri 11 30am, Tue, Thu 12 30pm Wed 3 30pm **Blue Planet** Tue 4 30pm, 8 30pm Wed 11 30am, Thu 4 30pm 10 30pm Fri 3 30pm, 9 30pm **Grand Canyon - The Hidden Secrets** Wed 1 30pm, 7 30pm Tue 12.20pm, Thu 10 30am, Fri 5 30pm **Thrill Ride - The Science Of Fun** Tue 10 30am 6 30pm 10 30pm, Wed 4 30pm Thu 12 30pm 8 30pm Fri 1 30pm, 7 30pm 11 30pm

PHOENIX CINEMA (0181-444 6789) ⊖ East Finchley **Contact** Tue 8pm **Gresse Pointe Blank** *Thu 9pm* ***Hercules*** *Wed/Thu 2pm Tue* 1 30pm **Keep The Aspidistra Flying** Tue 2 15pm **The Tango Lesson** to Thu 2 10pm (not Tue), 4 25pm, 6 40pm **Things To Do In Denver When You're Dead** Thu 6 30pm **Wilde** Tue 3 30pm, Wed 6pm, Thu 4pm **Will It Snow For Christmas?** *Tue 6pm, Wed 4pm*

PLAZA (0171-437 1234) ⊖ Picc Circ **The Borrowers** 2.30pm (Thu), 4 30pm, 6 30pm, 8 25pm (not Wed) **Cop Land** 1 30pm (Thu) 4pm, 6 10pm, 8.40pm (not Wed) **I Know What You Did Last Summer** 1 45pm (Thu), 4.05pm, 6 20pm, 8 40pm (not Wed) **One Night Stand** 1 40pm (Thu), 3 55pm, 6 20pm, 8 45pm (not Wed)

RENOIR *(0171-837 8402)* ⊖ Russell Sq **Kitchen (Wo Ai Chufang)** to Thu 1 35pm, 3 55pm, *6 15pm, 8 40pm* ***The Tango Lesson*** to Thu 2pm, 4 15pm, 6 30pm, 8 50pm

RIO CINEMA (0171-254 6677) 8R Dalston Kingsland **The Borrowers** to Thu 2pm, 4 15pm **Chasing Amy** Thu 8 40pm **Close-Up** Tue 6.30pm **One Night Stand** Tue 8 45pm, Wed 6 30pm **Palookaville** Thu 7pm

RITZY CINEMA *(0171-737 2121)* BR/⊖ Brixton **Allen: Resurrection** 9 10pm (not Wed/Thu) ***Austin Powers: International Man Of Mystery*** Thu 7 15pm (+ Mars Attacks! 8 55pm) ***The Borrowers*** 11am (Tue), 1pm 3pm, 5pm **George Of The Jungle** 1 10pm, 3 10pm, 5 10pm (not Wed) **Grosse Pointe Blank** Tue 7 15pm (+ Blood Simple 9 05pm) **Home Alone 3** 11 45am (Tue), 2 15pm, 4 30pm, 6 50pm **I Know What You Did Last Summer** 9 20pm (not to Wed) **It's A Wonderful Life** 1.05pm, 3 35pm, 6 20pm **Kiss Me Guido** 7pm, 9.20pm (Tue) **L.A. Confidential** 9pm (not Wed) **Miracle On 34th Street** Tue 10 30am **Mrs Brown** 1 20pm **Tim Burton's The Nightmare Before Christmas** Tue 10 30am **Nil By Mouth** Wed 5 10pm (+ Face 7 30pm) **Starship Troopers** Thu 9 10pm ***Tomorrow Never Dies*** 3 55pm, 6 30pm, 9 05pm (not Wed)

SCREEN ON BAKER STREET (0171-486 0036) ⊖ Baker St **The Borrowers** to Wed 3 30pm, 5 20pm, 7 10pm, Thu 2 40pm, 4 55pm, 6.20pm **The Full Monty** Tue 9pm **Starship Troopers** Thu 8 30pm **Tomorrow Never Dies** 3pm, 6 10pm, 8 40pm (not Wed)

SCREEN ON THE GREEN (0171-226 3520) ⊖ Angel ***The Full Monty*** 2 40pm, 4.40pm, 6 50pm (not Tue), 9pm (not Wed) **Shooting Fish** Tue 6 40pm

SCREEN ON THE HILL (0171-435 3366) ⊖ Belsize Pk **It's A Wonderful Life** 3 20pm, 6pm, 8 35pm (not Wed)

UCI WHITELEYS (0171-792 3332) ⊖ Bayswater **Allen: Resurrection** Tue 9 35pm **The Borrowers** Tue 11am, 1pm, 3pm, 5pm, Wed 11 50am, 12 40pm 2 35pm, 4 35pm Thu 12 45pm 2 40pm, 4 35pm **Cop Land** to Wed 6 30pm, 9 10pm (not Wed) **The Full Monty** Tue 7pm, Wed 6 45pm **George Of The Jungle** 11 45am (Thu), 2pm 4 20pm, 6 40pm 9pm (not Wed) **Hercules** Tue 11 30am, Wed 11am **Home Alone 3** Tue 12noon, 2 20pm, 4 40pm 7 05pm, Wed/Thu 11 30am (Wed), 1 40pm, 4pm, 6 20pm **I Know What You Did Last Summer** Tue/Thu 5 10pm (Tue), 7 30pm 9 50pm, Wed 4 25pm, 6.35pm **One Night Stand** 9 40pm (not Wed) **Spiceworld - The Movie** Tue/Thu 11 15am (Tue), 1 15pm, 3.15pm, 5 15pm, 7.15pm, 9 20pm, Wed 10 45am, 12 40pm, 2 35pm, 4.30pm, 6.25pm **Starship Troopers** Thu 12 55pm, 3 40pm, 6.30pm, 8 45pm, 9.20pm **Tomorrow Never Dies** Tue/Thu 12.40pm, 1 30pm, 3.25pm, 4 10pm, 6 10pm, 6.50pm, 8.50pm, 9.30pm, Wed 12.10pm, 1 15pm, 2 55pm, 3 45pm, 6pm, 6 15pm

VIRGIN CHELSEA (0181-970 6010) ⊖ Sloane Sq **Cop Land** Tue 8.30pm **The Full Monty** Tue/Thu 8.50pm **George Of The Jungle** 1 40pm (not Thu), 4pm, 6.10pm **Home Alone 3** to Wed 1.20pm, 3 40pm, 6 30pm; Thu 2pm **Spiceworld - The Movie** 2.40pm, 4.45pm, 7.10pm, 9 20pm (not Wed) **Starship Troopers** Thu 3pm, 6 10pm, 9pm **Tomorrow Never Dies** 1 30pm (not Thu), 4 10pm, 6 50pm, *9.30pm (not Wed)*

VIRGIN FULHAM ROAD (0181-970 6011) ⊖ South Ken **Allen: Resurrection** Tue/Thu 8.30pm **The Borrowers** 12noon (not Thu), 2 10pm, 4.20pm 6 30pm **I Know What You Did Last Summer** 1.50pm (not Thu), 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 9 15pm (not Wed) **It's A Wonderful Life** 12.40pm (not Thu), 3.20pm, 6pm, 8 45pm (not Wed) **L.A. Confidential** 2.20pm, 5 20pm, 8 15pm (not Wed) **Spiceworld - The Movie** 1 40pm (not Thu), 3.50pm, 6 10pm, 8.30pm (not Wed) **Tomorrow Never Dies** 1pm (not Thu), 3.40pm, 6 20pm, 9pm (not Wed)

VIRGIN HAYMARKET (0181-970 6016) ⊖ Picc Circ **The Full Monty** 1 25pm, 3 45pm, *6 15pm, 8 50pm (not Wed)* **L.A. Confidential** 2pm, 5pm, 8.35pm (not Wed) **Nil By Mouth** 2.35pm, 5 35pm, 8.35pm (not Wed)

VIRGIN TROCADERO (0181-970 6015) ⊖ Picc Circ **Allen: Resurrection** Thu 1.20pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm **The Borrowers** 12 20pm, 2.15pm, 4 20pm, 6.20pm **Cop Land** to Wed 1.30pm, 4pm, 6 40pm, 9 10pm (not Wed), Thu 9.15pm **Face/Off** Tue/Thu 8.50pm **George Of The Jungle** 12.10pm, 2 20pm, 4 30pm, 6 40pm **Hercules** 12noon, 2pm **Home Alone 3** 12.15pm, 2 30pm, 4 45pm, 7pm, 9 20pm (not Wed/Thu) **I Know What You Did Last Summer** 4.15pm, 6 45pm, 9 10pm (not Wed) **One Night Stand** Tue/Thu 9pm **Spiceworld - The Movie** 12noon, 1pm, 2 20pm, 3.20pm, 4 40pm, 5 50pm, 7pm, 8.10pm (not Wed), 9 20pm (not Wed)

WARNER VILLAGE WEST END (0171-437 4347) ⊖ Leic Sq **The Borrowers** 12.20pm, 2.20pm, 4.40pm, 7pm **Contact** 5 10pm **Cop Land** 12 10pm, 2 30pm, 4.50pm, 7 10pm, 9 40pm **George Of The Jungle** 1pm, 3 10pm, 5 15pm, 7 15pm **Hercules** 12noon, 2pm **Home Alone 3** 11.50am, 2.10pm, 4 30pm, 6.40pm, 9 15pm **I Know What You Did Last Summer** 12 30pm, 2 40pm, 5pm, 7.20pm, 9 30pm **L.A. Confidential** 12noon, 3pm, 6pm, 9pm, 8.10pm **A Life Less Ordinary** 9.20pm **My Best Friend's Wedding** 8.40pm **One Night Stand** 1.50pm, 4 10pm, 6.30pm, 8 50pm **Prince Valiant** 12.15pm, 2 15pm, 4 15pm **Welcome To Sarajevo** 6 20pm

Resign? Fiddlesticks. Mowlam is doing a splendid job

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There may come a time when Mo Mowlam has to step down from the job of Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. She may be worn down by the whole sorry business – improbable in a woman of her determination. Or her fate may be politically banal: a time for change in Tony Blair's Cabinet arrives, and he decides her skills would be better deployed in some other office. She may win (in a game where winning means advancing a few steps towards peaceful agreement). She may lose, and the process of round-table negotiation begun so tentatively this year collapses into bloody mayhem, to which Stormont's and London's only response will be containment, to secure minimum levels of public safety.

But one thing is clear: those who call for her to quit now are making mere passing fools of themselves. There is no case for her resigning over this Maze killing, or in the immediately foreseeable future. On the contrary: her good humour and willingness to cast a fresh eye over old intractables are more than ever to be valued. One of the more depressing aspects of the last few days has been this ludicrous, high-pitched squeaking of the word "Resign".

Ms Mowlam has embarked on the correct response: to tackle security implications, to examine the administration of the Maze Prison, but above all to keep that round table going. She has recently been attacked for paying too much heed to the voices in Dublin. Well, she has not listened to the bizarre suggestion from Bertie Ahern that the peace talks should be transferred from Stormont to London or Dublin; bizarre, since it takes little wit to work out that any lasting political *rapprochement* must be made and guaranteed by Belfast's political actors.

Ms Mowlam's direct responsibility for the Maze Prison also needs careful weighing. As our Northern Ireland correspondent argued yesterday, the Maze Prison is no ordinary jail. Its governor needs to make compromises in order to protect prison staff; in order to respect conventions accepted, for better or worse, in the labelling and treatment of prisoners. But murder within a prison's walls is a paradox too far. Ms Mowlam needs quickly to receive and publish a report on the killing of Billy Wright that not only explains how it happened, but also recommends a new approach to running the jail.

Meanwhile it ill becomes Conservatives to let fly at the Secretary of State since, whatever the situation in the Maze, it cannot be much different now from how it was on 1 May: indeed, it is at least arguable that the Tories are wholly responsible for the climate in the Maze: it has evolved almost exclusively under their stewardship. Dr Mowlam's Tory predecessor presided over the same system of visits and concessions for one good, if unpalatable, reason: that is the system that works in the circumstances of Ulster. Labour has a long way to go to get anywhere near the Tory record in presiding over jailbreaks subsequently disowned by Tory ministers.

As for the Inla and the Loyalist terrorists, the Government has few, if any, levers over splintered fractions of movements within movements. At best, it can seek to operate on them through the "mainstream" organisations represented at the Stormont talks; at worst, it has to live with – and prepare public opinion to live with – residual terrorism of the kind seen in Dungannon the other night. If in the land of the blind the one-eyed man is king, so after 30 years of insurrection, minimised mayhem represents progress of *some* sort.

Ms Mowlam allowed herself the other day the hope that the peace process could bear issue by late spring. She knows results, real or symbolic, have to be seen to flow relatively quickly or else the critical audiences behind the negotiators' backs will start getting murderously restive. But she also knows that – to paraphrase the quiz-show host, *once* things have started, perhaps they have to finish. The stake placed by the IRA grows as the peace process proceeds; Unionist politicians, too, are starting to make elaborate calculations based on the longevity of their own participation, factored by the quality and length of Sinn Fein's presence at the table. Taken at its face value – not always a naïve thing to do – Martin McGuinness's response to the revenge killings was measured and moderate, though Sinn Fein remains worryingly silent in its conversations with Irish nationalism about conceivable outcomes from the talks.

In the past four weeks, Labour has had good cause to ponder on Harold Macmillan's governing *cliché*: events, dear boy, events. Things happen, and ministers are forced on to their back feet. Nowhere is this truer than in Northern Ireland, where a handful of gangsters can so easily call the shots. They have no discernible plan; their victims are often randomly chosen. But Ms Mowlam can bring something to bear more powerful by far than the deployment of troops or forceful policing. She faces the New Year with the talks boat rocking, the crew mutinous. She deserves to be defended by both her supporters and her opponents. Indeed, a grown-up Conservative leader would be giving that support to her right now.

Post letters to Letters to the Editor
and include a daytime telephone number.
Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address.
Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

LETTERS

Sir: Your description of Antinous [left] as 'a friend' of Hadrian [right] ('Revamped Louvre dusts off its fusty old image', 19 December) is coy at best and misleading at worst. While Hadrian did not see much of his wife, his love for Antinous is one of the great romances of antiquity. After the fatal accident in the Nile, the Emperor declared Antinous a god, sent statues of him to every corner of the Roman Empire and founded a city, Antinoopolis, in his honour. – NICHOLAS PACKWOOD, Design Space and Society Research Unit, University of Lancaster

Photographs by Tom Pilston of portrait busts in the British Museum

Victims in the dark

Sir: Your headline "Schizophrenic jailed for killing" (23 December), gives a misleading impression of how mentally disordered offenders are dealt with. In these cases the offender is made the subject of a "restriction order" not a prison sentence. Rightly, such people become patients, (usually restricted in one of three high-security special hospitals) not prisoners; and when they are cured, or no longer considered a danger, they are discharged, usually conditionally. During that period they may, when it is deemed appropriate, be confined in less secure accommodation before their eventual discharge. There is no way of knowing – if you are on the outside –how long the period of confinement will be.

This is of more than academic interest for victims, or the families of victims, involved in the case, because once the offender becomes a patient there is virtually no hope of ever learning anything about his or her whereabouts or of any discharge plans, or applications to vary the "restriction order". Medical confidentiality is all-pervasive and the victim has no right to know.

For families who have lost loved ones this is a cruel and unfair system. If "their" offender had been dealt with under the criminal system they would be kept informed of key developments in the custodial process. They would know roughly how long the prisoner would serve. They would be informed of any release plans and, if they wished, they could express their views. This system does not give them the right to decide on questions of release – nor should it – but the process includes them and acknowledges their involvement in what are always traumatic cases.

There have been real improvements in the way that victims of crime are treated. Until fairly recently they were often treated appallingly. But for this group of people there have been no improvements and their needs are still ignored even though they have suffered the loss of loved ones, often in the most dreadful circumstances.

PETER ANDERSON
Victim Support Co-ordinator
Llandrindod Wells, Powys

Dependency culture

Sir: David Aaronovitch ("Conservatism of the left – the siren voice that stifles change", 18 December) has struck the right note.

I was a social worker for 23 years and was involved with just about every aspect of human misery. I learnt that not only are the poor always with us, but some of them have every intention of remaining with us.

Families with chronic personal problems which infect the next generation, and the next, see a social worker as being as much part of their extended families as their grandparents and grandchildren. Social services departments are locked into a symbiotic relationship with them and therefore cannot bring about radical change for the better. It is a system of mutual dependency.

GPs, sympathetic to the shortcomings of some of their patients, admit them to the ranks of the disabled when, like Otto's cousin, they are unfortunate but not unemployable.

I am an ardent supporter of free libraries, the National Health Service, and free education, but I am also in favour of the personal dignity that comes with honest labour. It is a form of benevolent slavery to reduce able people to permanent dependency.

The way forward? I don't have any quick cures. It's a start, though, if people like you are prepared to voice unpopular views.

JUNE NICHOLLS
Lichfield, Staffordshire

Sir: I would offer strong support, from personal experience, of Polly Toynbee's statement that, "Taking away [benefit] entitlements from those who don't need them will cause an outcry, but one the Government could face down, so long as it is crystal clear where the money is going and why." ("Beveridge's phoney system", 22 December)

Since a stroke three years ago, I am a disabled pensioner. State pension for my wife and self, plus attendance allowance, brings us several hundred pounds a month. But as I accept it, I see it as hardly more than I pay in tax on my good vocational pensions. In effect, they give me back my own money, when a fairer society would still take some contribution from me as one of the better placed.

Labour needs to use some form of income assessment as one of its tools if it is to seek firmness. There are many others besides myself with other income over £12,000 or £15,000 whose benefits, if they continue, could be cut by half or more. We might grumble, but we ought to be farther back in the queue – and we would still vote Labour.

I am concerned by the numbers of Labour supporters rushing to tell Tony Blair what he must not even consider. This is no way to get an effective review.

DAVID KINNERSLEY
Chesham,
Buckinghamshire

Sir: I was dismayed to see a paragraph about the Clay Cross councillors' refusal to increase council house rents in the early 1970s included in your article "Sorry history of corruption in local government" (20 December).

Those councillors were not corrupt. They stood by their principles at great personal cost. Their behaviour may have been Canute-like in the face of the tide of history then, but they deserve honour, not opprobrium. Some of us think they were right.

Keeping social housing rents down to levels which can be paid by families with only one earner in the lower income groups without means-tested housing benefit is the best, probably the only, way of tackling the dependency culture.

Councillor TUFFY TURNER
Mid Suffolk District Council
Battisford,
Suffolk

Turkish democracy

Sir: Andrew Kevorkian's outrageous claims about Turkey (Letters, 27 December) should not be left unchallenged.

One should always begin by remembering the degree of tolerance and religious freedom that existed within the Ottoman Empire. The fact that Jewish refugees, driven *en masse* from Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492, settled in Ottoman domains is perhaps the best-known proof of that tolerance. Things of course started to go wrong in the Balkans towards the end of the 19th century, but here again we must be careful not to overlook half the picture: before 1878 there were roughly as many Muslims as Bulgarian Orthodox in the territory of present-day Bulgaria. The emancipation of Bulgarians (as well as Greeks) meant the expulsion, murder, and subjugation of Turks.

As for the 20th century, it will not be wrong to say that, especially after the Second World War and until the mid-1970s, Turkey had a better record of democratic practices than Spain, Portugal and Greece (which were all under dictatorships).

This brings us to another important point: how EU membership helped secure democracy in these southern European states. Knowing that Turkey will never be admitted to the EU, a great majority of the population in Turkey expect the EU to at least share some of the country's problems and understand her concerns (over Cyprus, for example). The nonsense put forward by people like Mr Kevorkian may make even this impossible.

SINAN AKINAL
Manchester

London's dome

Sir: I note that the escalating cost of the Millennium Dome project is now estimated at £750m – a bill aimed straight at taxpayers, whether they like it or not ("Dome planners add substance to style", 22 December).

It is a fact that the majority of national daily newspaper writers suffer a temporary blindness when out of sight of London Transport buses, and it is also a fact that the majority of the UK population does not live in the bottom right-hand corner of the country.

Bully for those who live in Greenwich, but what about the rest of us, many of whom would like to see all hospitals fully operational and up to strength, would like to see their children's schools raised to a consistently high standard, and may not actually care too much for an exhibition of "ideas"? Perhaps the "volumetrically bold" amount of our money could be invested in a more useful fashion?

The politicians may be listening, but I feel fairly sure that they are not hearing.

MIKE FICKLING
Huddersfield, West Yorkshire

The toddler Jesus

Sir: Glad tidings! Miles Kington has taken up New Testament studies (16 December). But he is way off-target in suggesting that Mary's Boy Child would have made grown-up remarks at the age of six months. Luke's Gospel (2:46,52) makes it quite clear that Jesus was a normal child who "grew both in body and wisdom" and asked questions rather than giving answers.

JOHN COUTTS
Gravesend, Kent

Freeze them out

Sir: As the father of three teenage boys, I find it amazing that no one has invented the lockable refrigerator.

JAMES JACOBY
St Hilary, Cornwall

Yes, the Germans laugh, even at themselves. Funny about the English though

MILES KINGTON

Several years ago I became involved in a series of programmes for Radio 4 called *It's a Funny Old World* in which the producer Anne-Marie Cole and I looked at the national sense of humour of different countries. We thought that Germany would be one of the hardest subjects to tackle, as we suffered from the usual British conviction that the Germans have no sense of humour, but this turned out predictably not to be the case – among other things, the Germans have a strong sense of *Schadenfreude* in their jokes, a strong tradition of jokes about the people of Ostfriesland very reminiscent of our Irish jokes, and even an equivalent of our Essex jokes in the form of jokes about people who drive Manta cars.

But the most unexpected thing we discovered was that the Germans watch the same funny film every year on New Year's Eve. It lasts about 20 minutes, it is called *Dinner for One, James*, and it is British. I have never seen it on British television, but every year on German TV it is shown to an audience that knows every joke in it by heart and looks forward to seeing or hearing each gag again. There are only two characters in it, an aged lady and her butler, played by the half-forgotten English comedian Freddy Frinton, who gets gradually drunker and drunker during the dinner, as he drinks all the drinks poured out for the absent guests …

Now, this is obviously something we can all curl our lip at. The very idea of any nation being content to watch the same little film at the same time every year – how desperately predictable and unimaginative! The only snag in all this is that on at least two occasions I have encountered people who possessed videos of *Dinner For One, James*, and I have watched it, and I think it is one of the funniest films I have ever seen, and that if I had the chance to watch Freddy Frinton's inspired performance as the gradually intoxicated butler every year, I would leap at it. And that the Germans are to be envied for their good taste in humour.

One of the items that Anne-Marie Cole dug up for our Radio 4 programme on Germany was a recording of a German comedian called, I think, Loriot, who had done some routines in English for Channel 4. One of them started more or less as follows:

"Hello. My name is Loriot. I suffer from what you would call a disability. You see, I am German. Well, someone has to be …"

This is startlingly similar to the famous Bill Bryson opening, "I come from Des Moines, Iowa. Well, someone had to …" but I think that the Loriot line is better, because it applies self-deprecatingly to a whole nation, and also because Germany plays a larger part in our national awareness than Des Moines does.

In fact, I remember that the Loriot routine went on to apologise for the unpopularity of the Germans in a sophisticated and rueful way that few British or American comedians could manage. Everyone resents the Americans abroad, in the same way that the British used to be resented, though now that our power has faded we are just seen as quaintly irrelevant. But when did you ever hear an American comedian make fun of the image of the American abroad, the insensitive, ignorant, linguistically challenged loud American abroad? When did you last hear a British comedian knock the British abroad? We British make jokes about the Germans abroad getting up at dawn and reserving pool-side places with their towels, but when did you ever hear a British comedian make fun of the atrocious image presented by the British abroad? Including our obsequious habit of respecting towels laid down at dawn by imperialistic German families…?

I gather there is a new smash hit film in Germany which does indeed look at the drunken and bad behaviour of the Boche abroad. I can't remember the name of the film, but it seems to be very much like *Men Behaving Badly* in Mallorca. If so, it sounds suspiciously as if the Germans are capable of laughing at themselves after all. This should worry us. The British have always prided themselves on being able to make fun of themselves, though the evidence for this has always been hard to find. It might be worrying if the Germans turn out to be better at it.

Meanwhile, couldn't we be shown *Dinner For One, James* on British TV, if only once? I don't like to think of the Germans being offered funnier programmes than us every year on New Year's Eve.

هكذا من الاصل

Why Blair will soon invite Ashdown into the Cabinet

DONALD McINTYRE
ON THE CENTRE-LEFT CONVERGENCE

When Tony Blair used to say, semi-privately, before the election that he would be more radical than people expected him to be, no one quite knew what he meant. Radical in the traditional, liberal-left sense; or radical as Margaret Thatcher meant it? Eight months on, he is entitled to feel he has started to answer that question. Whether or not you use the term "radical centre", as some Blairites do, it is not a radicalism of the right.

The sweeping reforms in education and health are designed to deliver better public services, not stimulate the use of private care. Even welfare reform, the toughest element of his programme, is designed to generate more public funds where they are needed, not shrink the state, as the Thatcherites wanted – and want – to do.

And on constitutional reform, he has been unquestionably radical in a liberal sense – moving faster and farther than seemed likely to many doubters. Governments with large majorities have not been in the habit of devolving or sharing power.

Yet polling day for the Scottish Parliament will happen in May 1999. Elections for a London mayor, in its own way more of a genuinely Blairite innovation, since it wasn't even on Labour's agenda until he became leader, will take place in 2000. The White Paper on the incorporation of the European Convention of Human Rights builds into the British constitution a new and historic check on the the power of the executive. More unexpectedly, the Cabinet has approved a freedom of information measure which is significantly more liberal than it might have been. Blair first brought leading Liberal Democrats into a joint cabinet committee on constitutional reform. Then he granted proportional representation for the 1999 European elections, and followed up by underpinning his promise of a referendum on electoral reform for the Commons by appointing the Jenkins commission to come up with an alternative voting system. In doing so, he showed at the very least that he is ready for the country to decide whether it wants to change the way it elects its government. It is safe to assume that he has not set up a high-powered cabinet committee on Lords reform without fully intending to push through the changes which an unholy alliance between Michael Foot and Enoch Powell forestalled in the late Sixties.

This is a familiar catalogue. But whether or not you agree with all the items on it, you can't really deny that it adds up, after just eight months, to a pretty formidable programme for constitutional change. And it also has consequences for the future shape of party politics. It demonstrates, first of all, that on political reform Blair, though notably not himself a constitutional obsessive, has been prepared not just to think the conventionally unthinkable, but to do it. Which in itself suggests that he could go farther still. If he has proved that he meant what he said about so much else, perhaps we should be re-examining some of the other things he has been saying. A good starting-point is his conference speech in Brighton in October. In a relatively short section on constitutional reform he acknowledged that "some of you are a bit nervous about what I am doing with the Liberal Democrats". Then, unrepentantly, he added: "Since this is a day for honesty, I'll tell you: my heroes aren't just Ernie Bevin, Nye Bevan and Attlee. They are also Keynes, Beveridge, Lloyd George. Division among radicals almost 100 years ago resulted in a 20th century dominated by Conservatives. I want the 21st century to be the century of the radicals."

I suspect that the significance of this passage has been greatly underestimated. It was the clearest sign yet that Blair is fundamentally unsympathetic (as his third Liberal hero Lloyd George was) to the wastefulness of two parties competing for the same territory in the centre and centre left. Particularly when nothing any more separates them ideologically. More important, it suggests that the unprecedented decision to bring Paddy Ashdown and his colleagues into a cabinet committee at the heart of government – which, interestingly, happened with scarcely a murmur of protest in either party – is merely part of a bigger picture.

This doesn't necessarily mean a merger, at least in the foreseeable future. For the moment, the deep tribalism in the many parts of their parties that neither of them have yet reached would probably militate against it. But the logic of his conference speech does point rather clearly to something else: bringing some of the best Liberal Democrats into the Government well before the next general election.

If – and for a few hours it seemed a possibility – Blair had immediately after the election offered Paddy Ashdown the job of, say, Northern Ireland Secretary, and Menzies Campbell Defence, it would have been a hard offer to refuse. Here would have been two able men, deeply sympathetic to the Blair programme, having taken up politics because they wanted to do things rather than just say them, having the prospect of office dangled before them at long last. Probably they would nevertheless have regretfully declined. What could their party claim it had secured in return? It did not, even then, have a guarantee of proportional representation for the European Parliament, a change which would strengthen its base, but which David Steel had been humiliatingly denied in return for propping up the Callaghan government in the late Seventies. That picture has now altered quite substantially; true, they still do not have their precious Commons PR – though they are closer to electoral change than they have ever been. And nobody can look back at that list of constitutional advances and deny that real progress has been made. What reasons, other than those of sheer tribalism, would now justify the stubborn refusal of office? My guess is that Blair is now impatient to gather together the collective anti-Tory forces, while he is ahead. All the theological discussion over electoral systems has always been subordinate in his mind to how best to keep the Tories out of office for a long, long time. He likes Ashdown. He has no patience for false arguments between politicians whose world view is fundamentally similar. It follows that if the 21st century is to be the "century of the radical", as the 20th was that of the Conservatives, the two parties of the centre left will have to start reuniting at the end of this century, just as they split in two at the beginning of it. The first step will surely be Liberal Democrats in the Cabinet. Maybe it won't happen in the next reshuffle, though it could. But some time soon, quite possibly next year, Paddy Ashdown and a handful of his colleagues will surely get the chance to decide whether they want to continue nudging – and sometimes shouting – from the sidelines, or influence a Blair government from within.

On message: the images of Disneyworld are an affirmation of American ideals. Must Peter Mandelson, too, get down and vulgarise?

Mickey's real lesson for Mandelson: the American dream isn't British

DAVID WALKER
HOW TO FILL THE DOME

In the middle of Disneyworld, the most artificial, unauthentic place on earth, there is a diner called L'Originale Alfredo di Roma Ristorante. Think about it.

The menu is Italian going on eclectic. You can eat fettucini and grouper Veneziana. The fish is not caught within three thousand miles of the Adriatic and you can travel from Palermo to Perugia and never once see fettucini on *la carta di giorno* – nor in Rome since Alfredo, its inventor, never got closer to Italy than Lower Twelfth Street.

His eponymous *ristorante*, where diners are serenaded by fake opera singers, is in Epcot, the future-oriented twin of Disney's Magic Kingdom, the two fabulous cities making up Walt's Florida world.

It is a world where, to be fair to Disney's corporate bosses, gay employees can now get health insurance and other benefits for their partners, despite the hostility of American Baptists and other apostles of Christ's love on earth. Yet it is also a spick-and-span world where dirt, sex, bad language, drink and most of the other engines of human pleasure are banned or frowned upon. My abiding memory is of the person employed to march along behind the elephant in one of the many precisely timed daily processions armed not just with a bucket instantly to remove elephant muck but also with a giant aerosol can immediately to waft away any hint of unfitting odour.

Epcot is where, this week, our Dome Secretary, Peter Mandelson, is visiting. He needs ideas for filling the Great Space of Greenwich. His trip ought to be public money well spent. The Disney experience is the NEC-plus-ultra of theme parkery, the standard against which your Pare Asterix, Knott's Berry Farm, and Alton Towers have still to be measured.

Epcot's theme was once the Future but now includes the Environment and the World – or at least those images of the future and the external world that can secure corporate sponsorship while fitting the Disney world view.

In the space of a few yards, you can visit the cascades of Norway and a Moroccan casbah, enter a circular cinema showing the national beauties of Canada, witness the Fountain of Nations water ballet, pilot a teenager's brain, get shrunk to the size of a blood cell and watch a film about the developing foetus cut so as not to offend the aforementioned Baptists, and all the while imbibe tons of corporate publicity for Kodak, AT&T and General Motors.

Epcot, in other words, is a palace of polymorphism, syncretism's sacred site – while remaining every inch and every minute as American as apple pie. Epcot is the world as sanitised, packaged and disposable. It is one of the most passive leisure experiences in the world, sitting or standing.

Yet Greenwich, if it is going to get anywhere near succeeding, will have to borrow deeply from Disney. And Walt has much to teach in terms of branding, merchandising and repeat visits. If he is going to learn those lessons Peter Mandelson will have to get closer to America in spirit than sitting close to Paul Johnson – the Americans' apostolic advocate in Britain – at dinner.

What lessons should the Minister without Portfolio carry home with him from semi-tropical Orlando? There is climate, for a start: Greenwich has to be made as weatherproof as possible. If an army marches on its stomach, tourist crowds need to be fed, in gaudy, cheap and above all fast restaurants. The food at Disneyworld may taste the same but you do not have to go far to get it nor wait long for service.

Disney depends on corporate sponsorship and Peter Mandelson's anxiety will surely be whether British capitalism (forever letting socialists down) can hack it in the way American global corporate giants can, when they choose, put on a fine show.

It would be easy to say the Mr Mandelson is going to have to get down and vulgarise. Despite his appearances on the terraces at Hartlepool United, he does not come across as one of nature's lads. The Ministry of Sound is the epitome of cool compared with Disney. Lady Carla Powell and her pals won't approve of some of the crowd-pleasers the minister is going to have to import.

Yet the thing about Disneyworld, and especially Epcot, is the way the experience mixes an almost Reithian desire to educate and inform the masses with relentless pandering to lowest common cultural denominators. It is also, perhaps inevitably, a relentless celebration of the United States of America and all its 20th century works.

Under Epcot's domes you can see characters from *The Lion King* (a Disney movie, needless to say) roar in a specially made children's film about the environment. There is another film called *The Making of Me* which has "sensitive footage" – it would need to be in abortion-conscious America – of the developing foetus.

"Spaceship Earth", inside a 180ft-tall silver geosphere, offers visitors the chance to discover "innovative interactive communications" (sponsored by AT&T). In "Honey, I shrunk the audience" – presented by Kodak – visitors can play with cameras and screens and produce their own 3-D adventure. Just as American television advertising is, by and large, unironic, direct and the crudest of selling pitches, so Disney gives you the message straight: this is the greatest country in the world with a greater future ahead of it. People gladly pay for such self-affirmation

There's Peter Mandelson's problem. He does not just lack Mickey's ears or the faith in and love for technology shown by Mickey's countrymen. Without some sheen of British national and nationalistic self-confidence Greenwich will not offer anything like the style, consistency and profitability of the Disney experience.

A glimmer of hope in Africa's slide away from freedom

PAUL VALLELY
ON KENYA'S ELECTIONS

It was when they jailed a friend of mine, the editor of an innocuous church magazine in Nairobi, that I first realised just how corrupt and dangerous was the regime of the Kenyan president, Daniel arap Moi. My friend was a Kenyan of utmost probity who had dared to criticise the dictator in the mildest of terms. That was almost a decade ago and it set the seal, for me, on a raft of evidence about the malign influence of the man whose behaviour had already led his countrymen to coin the term "paramoia". In those days the British government refused to accept the growing evidence for fear of losing a useful trade advantage. In 1988, when she visited Kenya, Margaret Thatcher, the then Prime Minister, condemned as "un-British" suggestions such as mine that not all might be well with Moi's regime. Since then the evidence has grown inescapably. Whatever the outcome today when the results are declared in the election in which Moi has stood for a fifth term of office, the country which was once the jewel in the post-colonial crown is exposed as a miasma of corruption, favouritism, patronage and worse.

Moi's insidious fingers control the police, courts and media. Rape, beatings and mob killings are his tools; torture of political prisoners and criminal suspects is routine, according to Amnesty. The UN today ranks Kenya as the third most corrupt country in the world; a massive fraud involving fictitious exports of gold has reached right to the heart of government and cost the nation the equivalent of 1l1 per cent of its annual GDP. Kenya's failure to deal with corruption led the IMF to suspend a $216m loan agreement last July.

What is it with Africa? In next door Zambia the country's former leader, 73-year-old Kenneth Kaunda, languishes in jail by order of his successor. Nigeria suffers under the tyranny of generals. Elsewhere the continent is everywhere in the grip of civil war or the aftermath of it. In Malawi and the former Zaire populations are coming to the hard realisation that life after a despot is not much easier than before. Even in liberated South Africa increasingly disconsolate citizens are wondering when real change will come in their daily lives.

We know part of the answer. These were countries which were ill-prepared for independence by a colonialism which left them with imbalanced economies and an inadequate civil service. Next nature heaped on the challenge of climate change and excessive population growth. And then a one-sided system of international finance has added to all that manipulative terms of trade, an oppressive burden of debt and the the kill-or-cure pace of IMF-policed economic structural adjustment.

But there is more to it than that. The colonial period was too brief to develop in most Africans anything more than the most tenuous instinct for what democracy is about. It was not helped by the conviction in the early days of independence that the one-party state was the solution to ethnic rivalries inside the rational boundaries which the Europeans had met in Berlin to draw across the continent: there are 40 tribes in Kenya alone.

But The Party proved a passport to the patronage which might have been effective within the tribe but which descended into corruption within the state. The West tolerated the fact because powerful dictators like Mobutu in Zaire and Moi in Kenya were a bulwark against the spread of Communism. But with the end of the Cold War the nations which controlled the aid purse strings began to demand multi-party democracy. The concept was swallowed by many Africans that in Zambia a large number of voters thought that Multi-Party was actually the name of the party which was to oust the ruling Unip party.

Even so, when Unip and its founder, Dr Kenneth Kaunda, were defeated, the father of the nation accepted the judgement of the electorate and stepped down. It was greeted as a victory for the democratic process but the rejoicing was premature. Kaunda's successor as president, Frederick Chiluba, is demonstrating a growing authoritarianism which is disconcerting. Elsewhere, in Uganda, President Museveni has won the endorsement of the West for his "good governance" strategy to respect human rights, stamp out corruption, and clean up his administration, yet he too refuses to allow other political parties to campaign in the country.

It ought to have been easier for Kenya and Nigeria, with their greater wealth and expertise. But those advantages have been steadily thrown away by consistently bad government. President Moi has amassed a fortune to rival the £5bn stolen from the people by his leopard-skin hatted friend Mobutu on such a scale that a new word was invented for this style of government – kleptocracy.

Moi also indulges in personal extravagances – like a £32m personal jet fitted out in white leather. But politically he has been more supple. In response to pressure from Western aid donors he introduced multi-party elections in 1992, and then smothered the opposition in rules that distorted the spirit of democracy. That year he also virtually destroyed the Kenyan shilling by printing $250m worth of unsupported extra banknotes to finance his campaign. He subsequently reneged on reforms promised in the run-up to the 1992 elections.

Yet, tragically, one of the factors which has aided him most has been the inability of the opposition to co-ordinate against him. An umbrella group, the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy, which had enjoyed majority support, split into rival factions when it came to selecting a candidate to oppose Moi. As in South Africa, it has been only the churches which have held together the opposition, monitoring human rights abuses and calling for free speech and accountable government. Their reward has been attacks on the Anglican Cathedral by riot police with tear gas and savage clubbings.

Yet South Africa also holds a model for a solution. It does not just benefit from a more developed economy and civil society and a larger middle class. It also has a helpful demographic. Though the ANC is the dominant party, the Western Cape is run by the National Party and KwaZulu/Natal is under the control of Inkatha. It has had, perforce, to learn the politics of opposition. But it is a lesson which the rest of Africa can only learn for itself.

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FINANCIAL JOURNAL OF THE YEAR

Housing data boosts hopes of soft landing for economy in 1998

Hopes for a soft landing for the economy in 1998 received a boost yesterday after the UK's biggest mortgage lender said the housing market was poised for a slowdown, while new figures showed business failures were at a seven-year low. *Diane Coyle* **and** *Michael Horrison* **report.**

Halifax joined the other lenders in forecasting that house prices would rise more slowly in the next year. It predicted yesterday that house price inflation would drop from 6 per cent in 1997 to around 5 per cent in 1998 and 4 per cent the following year. Nationwide, the biggest building society, believes growth will fall even more sharply, from 12.6 per cent this year to 7 per cent in 1998.

Hopes that the economy is gliding towards a gentle slowdown got a boost from separate figures showing that the number of British businesses going bust fell to a seven-year low in 1997. The figures, published by the business information group Dun & Bradstreet, showed that 36,368 businesses failed this year – a drop of nearly 5,000 on 1996 and the lowest level of failures since 1990.

Philip Mellor, a senior analyst at Dun & Bradstreet, said: "Provided there is no substantial downturn in the economy, the country's annual tally of business casualties will be back to pre-recessionary levels by the millennium."

The steep fall in the number of businesses going to the wall in 1997 came as a surprise. After a sharp reduction in 1994, the decline in the failure rate appeared to have reached a plateau at around the 40,000 mark. But there was a marked slowdown in the number of business failures as the year went by with the figures dropping from more than 10,000 in the first quarter to under 8,000 in the last three months of the year.

Most predictions for the housing market are, like forecasts for the economy as a whole, converging on a soft landing. Halifax's forecast for house prices during the next year – with a regional range of 3 to 8 per cent – is close to recent predictions from Nationwide and the Council of Mortgage Lenders (CML). The CML put the next year's increase at 5-6 per cent, while Nationwide opted for 7 per cent.

However, this near-consensus disguises a sharp difference between the two big lenders as to what has happened during 1997. According to Halifax, house price inflation in the UK did not exceed 7.2 per cent at any point in 1997.

But according to new December figures from Nationwide, prices increased by 0.8 per cent during the month to take the annual rate to 12.6 per cent. While the upward trend has slowed, its recorded UK average house price has now reached £62,037.

Paul Sanderson, head of research, said: "The market has come off the boil recently." The outlook for 1998 depended on the severity of the economic slowdown, he said.

City economists are inclined to split the difference, saying house prices probably climbed by around 9 per cent in 1997. Comprehensive Department of the Environment figures will not be published until well into the new year.

Halifax's new report says the idea there has been a boom is a misleading generalisation based on a few areas in London. "There has been no evidence in 1997 of any 'ripple' effect away from London of this faster growth in house prices," it says.

"Sustainable, healthy recovery" is both its prognosis for the housing market in 1998 and its diagnosis for the past 12 months.

"No move back to housing boom and bust is likely," the report says. It adds: "If inflation in the economy generally remains at or around current levels, this 1960s pattern might well characterise the UK housing market not only in 1998 and 1999 but also for the early years of the new millennium." While Nationwide agrees that demand has weakened, it foresees a continuing recovery with a "ripple" out to other regions.

Aside from this disagreement, the pattern of the recovery so far is reasonably clear. As Halifax's report notes, home sales has been steady at around 120,000 a month.

The annual total of 1.45 million is well up from the 1995 low of 1.1 million but well below the peak of 1.7 million in the late 1980s. The recovery in the number of transactions has come about despite the fact mortgage rates have been rising since May.

Halifax's mortgage rate has climbed from 7.25 per cent at the start of 1997 to 8.7 per cent at the end of the year. Its 1998 forecasts are based on the assumption that the level of interest rates will rise by another half to three-quarters of a point.

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On watch: Jureck Piasecki, chairman of the jeweller Goldsmiths, said sales were up but it was still tough on the high street Photograph: Tom Pilston

Last-minute shoppers dispel some of the retail gloom

The outlook for high street sales brightened yesterday as two retailers released upbeat Christmas trading statements, suggesting the recent gloom about the sector had been overdone.

Littlewoods, the mail order and department store group, said it had seen a late improvement in the run-up to Christmas. In the three weeks to December 27, sales in its retail division improved by 15 per cent over the same period last year. In the nine weeks to Christmas, however, sales were up just 6 per cent.

Barry Gibson, chief executive, said the figures were evidence that, spurred on by longer opening hours and prompt home delivery by mail order firms, customers were leaving their Christmas shopping to the last minute. "The consumers will shop when they want to shop," he said.

All of Littlewoods' growth came from its mail order business, which showed a 24 per cent increase in sales in the three weeks in December. Sales in the high street stores actually fell by 1 per cent during the same period as Littlewoods tried to protect its margins by abandoning discounting.

Meanwhile Goldsmiths, the jeweller, reported that in the four weeks to 27 December sales at its 139 high street outlets increased by 17.3 per cent. Sales from comparable stores were up 7.9 per cent on the previous year.

Chairman and chief executive Jureck Piasecki said the figures did not necessarily show that sales would be better than expected across the board. "We're outperforming the sector," he said. "It's very difficult on the high street." Goldsmiths' shares put on 12.5p to close at 275p.

Industry experts said the figures showed investors had been overly pessimistic about the sector. "When retailers say sales are slow they probably mean against budget, not against the previous year," said Clive Vaughan of Verdict, the research group. "We're still confident that December 1997 will represent sales growth over December 1996."

The risk, however, is that retailers who expected a Christmas bonanza will be left with too much stock, which then has to be discounted. The effect is expected to be particularly pronounced for seasonal goods like clothing, which were caught out by the weather, and electrical goods, where sales have fallen back after the windfall buying spree.

– Peter Thal Larsen

Pay rises of up to 8% for McDonald's burger-flippers

Thousands of burger-flippers are set for bumper pay increases after McDonald's said it planned to raise the hourly rate it pays by up to 8 per cent and Burger King said it was reviewing its rates. *Peter Thal Larsen* **looks at a timely boost for some of the lowest-paid workers in the country as the Government's Low Pay Commission collects evidence on the planned minimum wage.**

From mid-January, McDonald's lowest-paid employees – if they are aged 18 or over – will earn £3.50 an hour, an 8 per cent increase from the £3.25 they get paid at the moment. In areas where the cost of living is high, like London, the hourly rate rises to £4.

Meanwhile Burger King, McDonald's closest rival in the fast food battle, said it planned to review pay levels on 8 January. The chain, a subsidiary of drinks group Diageo – the company recently formed by the merger of Guinness and Grand-Met – currently pays a basic hourly wage of at least £3.28 outside London, and £3.39 in the capital.

The rises will prompt speculation that sectors such as the fast food industry, which have traditionally relied heavily on low-paid workers, are preparing for the imminent introduction of a national minimum wage by the Government.

The Low Pay Commission, chaired by Professor George Bain of the London Business School, is looking into the issue and is expected to report its findings in the spring. That would pave the way for the implementation of a minimum wage in 1999.

The Confederation of British Industry argues that a minimum wage set above £3 would lead to job losses if the differential with wages higher up the pay scale was restored. The Trades Union Congress, however, has asked for the wage to be set above £4.

McDonald's denied that the pay increases were related to the minimum wage. "We review all wage rates every year," said a spokesman, adding that the group had to offer competitive wages to attract and retain competent staff. McDonald's expects the average pay increase across its workforce to be closer to 5 per cent.

Similarly, a spokeswoman for Burger King said the wage review was prompted by the need to attract more staff into the industry rather than by any policy move by the government.

Both chains need the extra people. McDonald's yesterday announced an ambitious expansion plan in which it will spend £85m setting up 100 outlets in the UK in the coming year, creating about 5,000 jobs. Approximately a third of the jobs will be in the South-east, with the same number in the North, 20 per cent in the Midlands and the rest spread across Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

However, as each restaurant requires a full-time management team of just five, most of the jobs will be part-time. Only 35 per cent of McDonald's workforce currently work 20 hours or more a week.

Burger King plans to open 55 new restaurants in 1998, creating between 1,500 and 2,000 new jobs.

International banks extend loans to South Korea to ease crisis

The world's largest banks are poised to extend some of the $100bn (£63bn) of outstanding loans to South Korea, in an attempt to stop the crisis from spiralling across the world's financial markets. As *Chris Godsmark in London and Stephen Vines* **in Hong Kong report, the talks came as Korea agreed to make sweeping financial reforms.**

The series of meetings held in the world's big financial centres yesterday fuelled speculation that lenders were preparing to extend loans to South Korea. The discussions follow mounting fears that Korean banks will default on foreign currency loans, which have soared in value after the collapse of the country's currency, the won.

The US central bank, the Federal Reserve, held separate meetings in New York with US and foreign lenders in an attempt to quantify their exposure to Korea. Most loans are thought to be short term, lasting up to 12 months, and analysts suggested they could be rolled over by between a further three months and a year. The extension would provide a breathing space while the International Monetary Fund (IMF) arranged up to $60bn of financial help for South Korea.

Representatives from UK banks held separate meetings in London, led by HSBC, which has assumed a coordinating role. HSBC said it would be rolling over loans maturing in January which would have been extended "in the normal course of business" but a spokeswoman emphasised that the bank had not yet agreed to extend all its Korean loans.

THE BIG LENDERS

Loans to South Korea by overseas banks at end of 1996

Japan	$24.3bn
Germany	$10.0bn
United States	$9.4bn
France	$8.9bn
United Kingdom	$5.4bn
Total loans	**$99.5bn**

Source: Bank for International Settlements

German banks, the most heavily exposed to Korea after Japan's, confirmed they had held talks with the Bundesbank and the German finance ministry. Deutsche Bank, which is leading the German talks, pledged to "safeguard the stability of the international financial system". Meanwhile, some 10 Japanese banks met in Tokyo and were also thought to have agreed to extend credits to Korea.

According to figures issued by the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), outstanding loans by private financial institutions to South Korea at the end of 1996 amounted to about $99.5bn, with those from Japanese firms at $24.3bn.

German and French banks have most to lose if Korean finance houses default on foreign commercial debt. Lenders in the two countries built up much of their exposure from 1993, attracted by spectacular growth rates in the tiger economies in Asia compared with recession in their home markets.

Salomon Brothers, which is advising the Korean authorities on the crisis, estimated that Banque Nationale de Paris (BNP) had lent up to $25bn to the Far East, including Korea, while Deutsche Bank's exposure was $22bn, or 10 per cent of its total lending.

Matthew Czepliewicz, banking analyst with Salomon Brothers in London, said the crisis could hit European banks' profits next year. "They have extremely low bad debt provisions at the moment so it wouldn't take much to upset their earnings growth", but he suggested this left room to cover provisions if Korean businesses were unable to pay their debts.

As bankers gathered to play their role in relieving the Korean crisis, legislators in Seoul finally started to bite the bullet on passing the legislation required to comply with the IMF's tough terms for its bail-out. Last week, the IMF said it would accelerate the handover of the first $10bn of aid if Korea implemented reforms.

Working against a tight timetable they tackled 13 financial reform bills and reached agreement on the most controversial which will bring supervision over the banking, securities and insurance industry under one agency. They also agreed to scrap the ceiling on foreign ownership of South Korean shares. The optimism was reflected in the foreign currency markets yesterday where the Korean won continued to gain ground, ending the day at 1,395 against the US dollar, compared with Friday's close of 1,498. The won had touched a low point of 2,000 just before Christmas.

Korean equity markets were unable to react to the new mood yesterday because the stock market was closed. However, the Tokyo stock market, preoccupied with its own concern about insolvencies, slumped at one stage to its lowest point in two and a half years. The key Nikkei 225 index, however, only fell 0.2 per cent, after recovering from a 300 point fall in early trading.

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BT woos business users with international discounts

British Telecom will today announce price cuts of 15 per cent for international calls made by many high-spending business customers, in the latest bid to stem the erosion of overseas call customers.

A new tariff package, called BT Key Countries, will be launched on 1 January giving 15 per cent discounts on existing prices paid by companies for calls to 10 nominated destinations, out of 30 possible choices. The scheme applies to businesses paying between £1,000 and £10,000 a quarter for calls, though BT said numbers eligible to take part were "commercially confidential." The scheme costs £7.50 a quarter for each country nominated.

The reductions, which come on top of existing discount offers, would cut the lowest possible price of a call to the US to 11.5p a minute, compared with a standard tariff price of 20.1p, and the cost of a call to France, Germany or Holland to 13.8p, against 24.2p on BT's standard tariff. A spokesman also declined to reveal the cost of the price cuts to BT, though they are thought to be in the low millions of pounds.

The move means BT has in effect abandoned quoting a standard tariff price for corporate customers after losing business to new rivals such as Colt and Esprit. BT has been increasingly concerned at price comparisons made by competitors against its standard tariff, which excludes the many discount packages. A spokesman said standard tariffs were now "irrelevant".

– Chris Godsmark

Actuaries warn of rising cost of pensions

The pensions industry is facing a bleak outlook in 1998, with further moves expected by the Government to remove tax breaks for retirement saving, according to Lane Clark & Peacock, a leading firm of actuaries. It said the cost of pensions had already risen by a quarter over the past five years because people were living longer and interest rates were lower. It estimated that the removal of advance corporation tax by the new Government would leave a typical individual needing to pay 24 per cent of salary into a pension fund, more than that allowed by the Inland Revenue, to gain an annual pension worth 50 per cent of salary at retirement.

Banks' ranking improves

The outlook for the UK banking sector is "broadly stable" according to Moody's analysts, with the sector set to benefit from the generally favourable economic conditions in the country. In the company's annual study of the sector, Moody's said the improved performance was rooted in "improved asset quality which was complemented by stronger pre-provision profitability as banks' cost initiatives bear fruit. UK banks now rank as among the most profitable European universal banks". Moody's added that the sector faced challenges from competition outside the sector, driven by technological innovation, and the advent of Economic and Monetary Union.

Pubs undercut high street

JD Wetherspoon, the pub company, said its 211 pubs in England, Scotland and Wales were serving a range of drinks at prices lower than those in three big supermarkets – Tesco, Sainsbury's and Asda. Wetherspoon chairman Tim Martin said: "The Campaign for Real Ale and the Monopolies and Mergers Commission have long lamented beer prices rising above the level of inflation year after year. However, pubs are not the only culprits – some of the big supermarket chains have also been getting in on the act."

Willis Corroon eyes India

Willis Corroon, one of the top four global insurance brokers, has set up a joint venture to take advantage of the expected deregulation of the Indian insurance market. Willis Corroon Group and Tower Insurance and Reinsurance Services are setting up the 50/50 owned Willis Corroon Tower as a reinsurance broker and insurance consultancy. Willis Corroon said the venture would be based in Mumbai (Bombay), adding that it has worked with Tower since 1979.

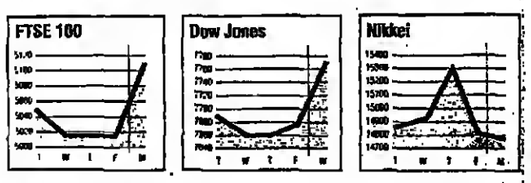
Unichem merger backed

Unichem, the drug retailer chaired by Kenneth Clarke, the former chancellor, jumped the final hurdle to its £970m merger with France's Alliance Sante yesterday as its shareholders voted in favour of the deal at its extraordinary meeting. The merger will result in Alliance Sante acquiring 104.6 million new Unichem ordinary shares, representing 36.8 percent of Unichem's enlarged share capital.

Independent Parts in talks

Independent Parts Group, the car parts maker, yesterday revealed it was in talks about a possible offer for the company that could be priced at about 140p a share. The shares closed yesterday up 20.5p at 134.5p.

STOCK MARKETS

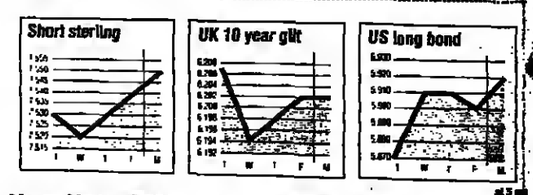


*Dow Jones index and graph at 5pm

Indices

Index	Close	Change	Change(%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield(%)
FTSE 100	5112.40	98.50	1.97	5367.30	4036.90	3.38
FTSE 250	4732.20	34.10	0.73	4963.80	4384.20	3.38
FTSE 350	2455.30	41.80	1.73	2570.50	2013.40	3.38
FTSE All Share	2396.74	38.67	1.64	2507.68	1989.78	3.37
FTSE SmallCap	2296.80	6.60	0.30	2407.40	2169.20	3.31
FTSE Fledgling	1253.70	3.60	0.29	1346.50	1219.90	3.32
FTSE AIM	966.60	5.80	0.59	1138.00	965.90	1.06
Dow Jones	7792.16	113.10	1.47	8299.03	6353.21	1.76
Nikkei	14775.22	-27.38	-0.19	20910.79	14569.43	1.06
Hang Seng	10502.99	160.55	1.55	16820.31	8775.88	4.04
Dax	4197.37	75.56	1.83	4459.89	2833.78	1.75

INTEREST RATES



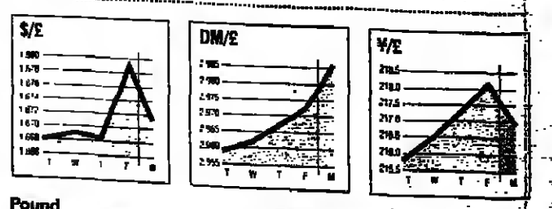
Money Market Rates **Bond Yields**

Index	3 month	1 yr chg	1 year	1 yr chg	10 year	1 yr chg	Long bond	1 yr chg
UK	7.67	1.19	7.69	0.69	6.20	-1.30	6.17	-1.49
US	5.91	0.29	5.97	0.16	5.75	-0.55	5.92	-0.62
Japan	0.77	0.30	0.72	0.14	1.92	-0.61	2.55	-0.61
Germany	3.64	0.49	3.92	0.67	5.26	-0.55	5.85	-0.82

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chge	Falls	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chge
Siebe	1190.00	80.00	7.21	Select Appart	565.00	-33.00	-5.52
Sun Life	445.00	29.00	6.97	House of Fraser	196.00	-6.50	-3.21
Capita Group	371.00	23.50	6.76	Vaux Group	258.5	-7	-2.63
Biocompatibles	485.00	30.00	6.59	Gallaher Grp	326	-5.5	-1.66

CURRENCIES



Pound

	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago
Dollar	1.6706	-0.70c	1.6910
D-Mark	2.9879	+1.54pf	2.6298
Yen	217.01	-¥1.52	196.50
£ index	104.90	+0.20	95.60

Dollar

	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago
Sterling	0.5986	-0.15p	0.5914
D-Mark	1.7872	+1.22pf	1.5552
Yen	129.91	+¥0.03	116.21
$ index	108.40	-0.30	98.70

OTHER INDICATORS

* at 5 pm	Close	Chg	Yr Ago		Index	Chg	Yr ago	Month ago
Brent Oil ($)	16.68	-0.31	23.16	GDP	113.90	3.70	109.84	[illegible]
Gold ($)	290.75	-3.90	369.55	RPI	159.60	3.70	153.91	[illegible]
Silver ($)	6.24	0.21	4.86	Base Rates		7.25	6.00	[illegible]

www.bloomberg.com source: Bloomberg

Ducking the important competition issues

OUTLOOK

ON GOVERNMENT INACTION OVER PREDATORY PRICING, HOUSING MARKET FORECASTS, AND THE SIZE OF THE FAR EASTERN CRISIS

This is a self-interested piece of commentary, admittedly, but it is also one with a wider significance for business and the way it is regulated. One of our competitors, *The Times*, is next month planning to cut the cover price of its Saturday edition to 10p a copy. There is also some talk of it doing the same to its Thursday edition. At this stage it is not clear whether this is being considered as a one-off, promotional offer, or as a more permanent thing.

If the latter, it will mark a significant escalation in the broadsheet newspaper price war which has been raging for the past three years. *The Times* already charges just 10p for its Monday edition and sells at a significant discount to its main rivals throughout the rest of the week.

Rupert Murdoch, proprietor of *The Times*, has consistently presented his price cutting strategy as part of a long-term commercial endeavour to lift the newspaper's circulation and thereby its profitability. His main target is the market leader, *The Daily Telegraph*, and in pursuing his quarry, he has spent and continues to spend a small fortune.

On a number of occasions Mr Murdoch has also expressed the view that there are too many national newspapers in Britain. A subsidiary aim must, therefore, be to bring about the closure of a competitor. However, Mr Murdoch has never publicly stated this aim as such. To do so would be to invite action by the competition authorities. As things stand it is next to impossible to bring an action for "predatory pricing" unless it can be shown that the aim is to force competitors out of business. Plainly, it is therefore also next to impossible unless the predator admits to this purpose.

Why does predatory pricing matter? If it brings about lower prices for consumers, then it might be thought of as positively a good thing. That a company is pricing in an anti-competitive fashion is not just notoriously difficult to prove, it is also sometimes hard to argue that there is anything fundamentally wrong with it. In the end, however, diversity of choice is the best and only reliable way of safeguarding consumer and other public interests. It is part of the function of any government to ensure that this variety of choice is preserved and developed, for it is in diversity and the innovation that flows from it that we find the greatest chance of economic success for all.

This is particularly important in newspapers and broadcasting, because diversity of opinion, information and reporting is such a fundamental part of the democratic process. But the same arguments also apply to other industries from supermarkets to banks, and from software providers to metal bashers where big companies use their greater clout and spending power to undermine and crush smaller competitors. Anti-competitive pricing can ultimately prove as damaging to the public interest as an anti-competitive merger.

When in opposition, a number of prominent members of the present Cabinet backed the case for strengthening the law so as to make predatory pricing an easier thing to prove. Since being elected, they have been strangely silent on the matter. The Government's new Competition Bill has failed adequately to address this vital area of competition law and although several amendments have been tabled that would bring the bill into line with the tougher competition practice of the US and Australia, the Government shows no sign of accepting them.

Nor has Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, or any other DTI minister, so far given an adequate explanation of why not. But then it was Mr Murdoch's *Sun* not won it for them, wasn't it? Most people will draw their own conclusions.

Panto-time among mortgage lenders

It becomes a bit of a pantomime when forecasters agree about the future yet disagree about the past. However, that seems to be the topsy-turvy way of the housing market. House price rises have been very modest this year, says Halifax. Oh no they haven't, retorts Nationwide. Both close ranks to agree that price rises will be modest in 1998. Either there was no boom, or if there was it was short-lived, and the housing market will be restored to steady, sustainable growth.

As in panto, we should all probably be highly suspicious of this traditional happy ending. The lenders are fed up with being portrayed as the villains behind a volatile market that in the past has exaggerated the ups and downs of the wider economy. They want to recast themselves as fairy godmothers presiding over an orderly housing market. Unanimity in the mortgage industry about prospects for a steady recovery, an end to boom and bust, is therefore a very predictable one.

They might well be right about next year. Past and future mortgage rate rises, declining consumer confidence and an increased supply of new homes coming on to the market should all contribute to a slower rate of house price inflation. At the same time, there is enough momentum in the recovery after the dark days of the early 1990s to keep the number of home sales and house prices at a healthy level.

But the underlying structure of the housing market has not changed. The supply of land and homes is relatively fixed, while long-run demographic changes mean demand is likely to continue to grow strongly. This adds up to increases in real house prices over the long term, with sharp fluctuations in the short term because demand can adjust much faster than supply over the course of a business cycle. The fact that inflation is lower than it used to be, or that some people still hear the scars of the late 1980s boom and subsequent bust, does not alter the analysis.

The only question is whether the shift to a low-inflation background will reduce the scale of the ups and downs in house price inflation. The answer depends crucially on the experience of the latest economic cycle, the first low-inflation recovery since the 1960s. In other words, it depends on what did happen to house prices last year. As any panto-goer would warn, you need to look behind you. Too bad Halifax and Nationwide can not agree what's there.

How Asia and Mexico differ

The crisis in the Pacific Rim economies and the different, though connected, deflation in Japan, will continue to rumble on as a big story for many moons yet, but it seems plain that we are now through the main watershed and into the white water beneath. Total disaster seems to have been averted, rather in the way it was with Mexico three years ago. The long-term impact of that crisis now seems to have been virtually nil.

Arguably, the Far Eastern turmoil is also a lesser earthquake than the Latin American debt crisis of the early 1980s, which posed a real threat to the world banking system. This one compounds an already bad situation with a number of Japanese banks, but the systemic risk appears limited. All the same, the long-term meaning and impact of this crisis is as yet far from clear. Those who think it will be confined to a "mere" 1 percentage point off world growth next year are probably being unduly complacent. Certainly it is far too early to start dismissing it as "just another Mexico". One important reason for this is that the buoyant US economy helped to rescue Mexico. With Japan in such a mess, there is no such big daddy to pull the Far East out of the doldrums.

Flotations slump but buy-outs soar

The amount of money raised through stock market flotations has slumped this year but the total value of management buy-outs soared to a record, according to contrasting surveys published yesterday.

Total funds raised by new issues, excluding demutualisations, fell from £10bn in 1996 to £3.5bn in 1997, according to KPMG Corporate Finance.

But a survey by the Centre for Management Buy-Out Research (CMBOR) shows that £10.4bn was spent on buy-outs and buy-ins in 1997 – a £2.6bn increase on the previous year. The figure could grow higher still, depending on how quickly CinVen completes the £900m buy-out of IPC Magazines from Reed Elsevier.

KPMG blamed the sharp fall in new issue finance on institutions investing more of their funds in large liquid stocks such as banks and pharmaceutical companies, the underperformance of the FTSE smaller companies index and problems with the Alternative Investment Market.

Neil Austin, head of new issues at KPMG, warned that if the trend continued smaller companies wanting to float could find themselves starved of equity funding.

Including the Norwich Union flotation, which raised £3bn of new money this year, the total value of new issues was £6.6bn. This compared with £10.14bn in the previous year but the 1996 figure was distorted by the flotations of Railtrack and British Energy, which raised £3.2bn.

The survey by CMBOR, which is based at Nottingham University and sponsored by Deloitte & Touche and BZW, showed that the buy-out surge was driven by a few mega-deals such as Nomura's £900m purchase of the William Hill betting chain. While the amount spent on buy-outs rose by 33 per cent, the number of transactions rose by only 3 per cent.

Tom Lamb of BZW Private Equity cautioned that while the UK buy-out market was entering 1998 in an incredibly buoyant state, there were growing worries that the next transaction might prove a "deal too far".

– Michael Harrison

Names quit Lloyd's as corporates take over

More than 2,000 investors in Lloyd's of London, who are known as names, quit the insurance market this year, it emerged yesterday.

Names, who put up their own money to underwrite Lloyd's insurance policies, are leaving the market in droves since the huge losses in the late 1980s.

Latest figures show that over the course of the year, 2,020 individual members left Lloyd's, while a further 1,105 switched to underwriting on a limited liability basis – the less risky investment option of being only liable to pay a limited amount on claims.

Only 6,835 names will remain on the traditional unlimited liability basis. They will underwrite about 19 per cent of the market's 1998 capacity, compared with the current year when there were 9,959 members accounting for 22 per cent of Lloyd's capacity.

Lloyd's said the move did not significantly decrease its capacity to underwrite as it was now gaining more money from corporate, rather than individual, investors.

Corporate investors will next year provide 60 per cent of the capacity, pumping in an extra £2.5bn compared with 1997. This is the first time that corporate members have underwritten the majority of insurance risk in the market.

Figures released yesterday indicated an allocated capacity of £10.13bn in 1998, down from £10.30bn in 1997. Lloyd's said the £20m drop was a small percentage of the £10bn total.

Traditionally, individual members with unlimited liability have underwritten capacity at Lloyd's, though many were forced out or chose to quit following losses of over £8bn for the underwriting years from 1987 to 1992. In order to maintain capacity, Lloyd's turned to corporates and other limited liability vehicles.

Lloyd's hit problems after a number of massive claims, such as the Exxon Valdez oil spill, asbestosis cases in the United States and the Piper Alpha oil platform explosion. Many names took heavy losses, including the ex-boxer Henry Cooper and the former jockey Lester Piggott.

Smaller companies join the party as Footsie soars

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Although most bargain hunters were busy offering a little belated seasonal cheer to retailers, a few strayed into the stock market, helping to send Footsie 98.5 points higher to 5,112.4.

For once the partying was not confined to blue chips. The FTSE 250 index rose 34.1 to 4,732.2 and the FTSE SmallCap index put on 6.8 to 2,296.8.

A few buyers nibbling here and there; futures activity, the usual array of new year tips as well as a strong New York opening combined to give an unexpected fillip to a session which most observers expected to be empty and downbeat.

But trading was thin. **BG's** buying-in of 236.7 million "B" shares, created to return cash to shareholders, accounted for much of the 512.5 million turnover. BG rose 4.5p to 280p.

Retailers responded to indications that Christmas trading perked up in the final days and the sales had got off to a good start.

Although few believe the gap in the festive sales volume will be completely closed, there is a growing feeling the market may have overdone the gloom factor.

So **Marks & Spencer** rose 29p to 610p; **Argos** 21.5p to 556.5p and **Boots** 48p to 878p. Others higher included **Carpetright**, 15p to 440p, and **Next** 12p to 691p. **Tesco** jumped 23.5p to 507p and **Safeway**, largely on takeover hopes, improved 11.25p to 338.25p.

Jeweller **Goldsmiths**, with a confident Christmas trading statement, sparkled 12.5p to 275p and encouraged support for **Signet**, the old Ratners jewellery chain, up 0.75p to 28.75p.

Engineer **Siebe**, 80p higher at 1,190p, was the best performing blue chip. Insurers Sun Life & Provincial and GRE were not far behind. Only seven blue chips gave ground.

Drink and leisure shares were cheerful but **Matthew Clark**, the under-performing cider and wine group, had a sobering time. The shares were at one time down 9.5p, ending off 3p at 163.5p, a closing low. Before its trendy cider sales were hit by the short-lived alcopops craze the shares topped 800p.

Takeover action continued on the under card. **Independent Parts** jumped 20.5p to 134.5p as mystery bidders – the existing management is probably one – were said to be hanging around with a 140p offer. The car parts group is the creation of **Gartland Whalley & Baker**, which specialises in nursing companies for a quote. GWB, up 2p at 105.5p, has 27 per cent of IP.

Long time sufferer **Enviromed**, a healthcare business, also attracted takeover excitement. The shares ended 2.5p higher at 8.5p after the company was spurred into action by a 3p jump. It said it had been involved in talks which had ended "some months ago". Tantalisingly it added it could not rule out an offer but then said the price it had discussed was "at a substantial discount" to the current price, presumably 6p.

United Biscuits hardened 10p to 220.5p, probably reflecting a revival in long-standing takeover hopes.

McBride, a maker of washing up liquids, held at 177p as investment group FMR bought 1.8 million shares, lifting its stake to 5.51 per cent.

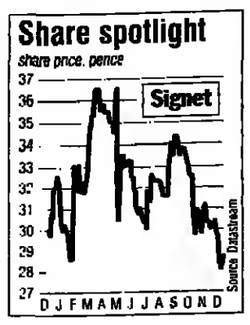
Langdons, the tea and coffee group, gained 0.25p to 2p as three directors picked up some of the shares unloaded by Plantation & General, which still has 11.51 per cent.

Ionica's recovery continued. The fledgling telephone group rang a 20.5p gain to 123.5p. Earlier this month bear raiders drove the shares to 60p. They reached 421p after a 390p summertime flotation.

Waterfall, the snooker club chain, rose 9p to 81p; expectations are growing that **European Leisure**, with 18.5 per cent, is preparing a bid for full control. EL held at 135p.

Reflec, the reflective ink group hit last week by a profit warning, recovered 7p to 16.5p; the shares have been as high as 126.5p.

Biocompatibles International gained 30p to 485p after winning European regulatory approval for its coronary stents (which support the walls of an artery), and **ML Laboratories**, down from a 468.5p peak, hardened 8.5p to 84p.



TAKING STOCK

Watch Cambridge Mineral Resources, seeking gemstones in Ireland as well as in Spain and Sweden. CMR is known to have found evidence of diamonds in one of its Irish exploration areas. But it is the possibility of corporate action which is intriguing. There is talk of a deal which could transform the company. With its shares at 16.5p CMR is valued at £3.8m.

Premier Asset Management shaded 0.5p to 15.25p. Chairman Lord Stevens, head of United News & Media, has lifted his stake to 6.6 per cent, buying 1.5 million shares at 14p. Presumably the shares were part of the block sold by two former directors. PAM has raised £1.4m by selling its interest in Dares Estates, up 1.5p to 18.5p, to the ex-directors.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is the latest twelve months' declared gross dividend as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the sharepriceidividend divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding extraordinary items but including exceptionals.
Other details: Ex rights: x Ex-dividend: a Ex-all: a Suspended: p Partly Paid; np Nil Paid; *AIM.
Source: Bloomberg
Gilt Prices are Bloomberg Generics.

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Gilts index n/a

Seaq volume: 512.5m trades 30,460

Market Leaders: Top 20 volumes

	Vol		Vol		Vol		Vol
BG	236.7m	Vodaphone	4.2m	Unilever	3.00m	Torotons	2.46m
Brit Steel	13.29m	London Clubs Int.	3.73m	Diageo	2.90m	Elec Bouncque	2.45m
Shell Transport	5.75m	Brit Petroleum	3.43m	Safeway	2.89m	BG	2.33m
Centrica	4.86m	Brit Telecom	3.41m	Prestbury Leisure	2.64m	Gen Elec	2.32m
BTR	4.23m	Smithkln Beecham	3.16m	Woolwich	2.64m	Bilton	2.18m

FTSE 100 Index hour by hour

Open	5003.9			11:00	5038.5	Up 24.6	15:00	5067.6	Up 73.7
9:00	5012.4	Down 1.5		12:00	5073.2	Up 59.3	16:00	5106.6	Up 92.7
10:00	5027.9	Up 14.0		13:00	5078.7	Up 64.8	Close	5112.4	Up 99.5

Government Securities

52 week High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
Index-Linked							
116.10	111.84	Tsy I/L 4.625 98	114.04	0.00	3.88	672	
104.81	104.53	Tsy I/L 2.5 01	104.81	0.04	3.37	366	
112.53	110.18	Tsy I/L 2.5 03	112.50	0.09	3.24	367	
124.50	117.41	Tsy I/L 4.375 04	124.28	0.05	3.19	678	
206.97	189.97	Tsy I/L 3 06	204.88	0.06	3.16	389	
108.56	101.69	Tsy I/L 2.5 08	108.22	0.06	3.11	369	
197.44	176.28	Tsy I/L 2.5 11	196.91	0.03	3.10	363	
184.19	144.69	Tsy I/L 2.5 13	163.66	0.00	3.00	340	
172.50	149.13	Tsy I/L 2.5 20	171.78	-0.03	3.09	379	
145.09	121.97	Tsy I/L 2.5 24	144.44	0.00	3.03	499	
142.53	119.91	Tsy I/L 4.125 30	141.88	0.00	3.06	5857	
Perpetual							
39.41	31.50	Con 2.5% Perp	39.41	0.00	6.34	896	
38.94	20.88	Tsy 3.5% Perp	38.94	0.00	6.42	30	
44.55	36.75	Tsy 3% Perp	46.97	2.41	6.39	302	
Shorts							
100.25	100.17	Exch 9 75% 98	100.00	-0.05	7.24	203	
104.00	99.90	Tsy 7.25% 98	100.01	0.00	7.20	6212	
104.03	104.11	Tsy 15.5% 98	106.03	-0.08	7.07	304	
109.13	104.22	Exch 0% 98	104.19	-0.01	7.05	2087	
105.34	102.25	Tsy 9.5% 99	102.47	-0.03	6.96	1171	
111.16	106.13	Exch 0.25% 99	106.22	0.06	5.32	7168	
108.12	104.50	Tsy 10.5% 99	104.78	-0.06	6.83	1145	
99.03	97.53	Tsy 6% 99	98.88	0.00	6.74	6794	
109.06	105.47	Con 9.25% 99	106.03	-0.03	6.79	1908	
Mediums							
106.44	100.56	Con 9% 00	104.63	0.00	6.66	303	
118.91	110.63	Tsy 11% 00	114.31	0.09	6.75	303	
103.94	102.06	Tsy 8% 00	103.59	-0.03	6.63	3435	
111.19	108.00	Tsy 10% 01	109.25	-0.03	6.50	3047	
109.47	102.75	Tsy 14% 01	107.66	0.09	3.81	355	
101.94	98.25	Tsy 7% 01	101.41	-0.06	6.37	5401	
102.88	98.00	Tsy 7% 03	102.06	-0.01	6.46	4901	
107.88	109.56	Tsy 9.75% 02	112.69	-0.06	6.54	3096	
107.92	102.34	Tsy 8% 03	107.16	-0.06	6.42	4607	
117.77	111.94	Tsy 10% 03	116.66	-0.06	6.45	3094	
116.59	112.56	Tsy 11.5% 04	113.75	-0.06	6.68	3941	
90.72	82.94	Fund 3.5% 06	90.56	0.06	5.32	7168	
118.06	110.47	Con 9.5% 04	117.16	0.09	6.37	1907	
107.88	94.44	Tsy 6.75% 04	102.25	-0.06	6.24	6479	
110.97	110.59	Con 9.5% 05	110.00	-0.16	4.37	6479	
130.66	124.97	Tsy 12.5% 05	129.22	-0.06	6.45	3149	
114.25	105.00	Tsy 8.5% 05	110.63	-0.03	6.29	3125	
110.03	99.94	Tsy 7.75% 06	109.59	-0.03	6.29	2660	
114.38	101.19	Tsy 8% 06	105.78	-0.03	6.55	3026	
Longs							
108.88	98.41	Tsy 7.5% 06	108.38	-0.01	6.36	4532	
123.69	119.06	Tsy 11.75% 07	122.28	-0.06	6.50	3052	
116.13	105.19	Tsy 8.5% 07	115.75	0.00	6.28	3195	
107.88	96.72	Tsy 7.25% 07	107.69	-0.03	6.20	2313	
122.00	109.09	Tsy 9% 08	122.00	-0.06	6.37	5414	
114.75	101.28	Tsy 8% 09	114.69	-0.06	6.23	3994	
100.15	86.38	Tsy 6.25% 10	100.13	0.03	6.13	1571	
124.94	109.63	Con 9% 11	124.88	-0.06	6.24	6068	
126.03	109.88	Tsy 9% 12	126.03	-0.03	6.25	5845	
93.19	80.75	Tsy 5.5% 12	93.08	-0.03	6.13	3015	
117.31	100.84	Tsy 8% 13	117.31	0.00	6.25	6271	
113.28	98.52	Tsy 7.75% 16	113.28	0.00	6.24	3121	
119.78	101.16	Tsy 8% 15	119.31	0.03	6.20	4989	
128.31	108.13	Tsy 8.75% 17	128.24	0.03	6.22	5375	
122.50	101.34	Tsy 8% 21	122.53	0.03	6.19	5260	

هكذا من الاجل

The forces that drive businesses to compete on a global stage

The advent of the global company has been widely predicted in recent times – and in many ways 1997 was the year in which the soothsayers were at last proved right. *Roger Trapp* examines a trend that could change the way companies do business.

Globalisation was on everyone's lips as business in a range of sectors sought to explain away their need to merge, acquire or restructure – usually with the loss of several thousand jobs, even though the era of "downsizing" was supposedly over.

Price Waterhouse – which, incidentally, is one of the four accountancy and management consultancy firms planning mega-mergers, has put globalisation at the top of its list of "eight trends driving companies into 1998 and into the new millennium".

Scott Hartz, global leader of the firm's management consulting practice, said: "Globalisation is the single biggest force driving corporate change. It affects organisational structure, technology, communications, product development, service delivery, people and training. Global 500 companies need to transform their organisations into global enterprises to compete successfully in the future."

As such language suggests, this is not a trend to be welcomed by the faint-hearted. Though much is made of the benefits for the customer or client of being able to obtain goods or services from anywhere in the world at the touch of a phone button and the flash of a credit card, the ramifications for the businesses seeking to meet these ever-more-demanding consumers are huge.

Not surprisingly, more than one senior partner of an accountancy firm has harked back to a golden age of less frenzied days, when clients could be told without fear of reprisals that their problem would be dealt with as soon as the appropriate people became free.

The pressure to compete on an international stage is also apparent in the increasing use of the term "world class". No longer is it enough – except perhaps for the moment in such comparatively regulated countries as France and Spain – for a company, for example, to be the best widget maker in Britain. If its customers can buy better widgets from overseas that is a completely worthless claim.

As Douglas Lamont, a Chicago-based consultant and academic on international business, points out in his recent book *Salmon Day*, globalisation is – in the current parlance – a "zero-sum *game*". Some organisations will win and some will lose and there is no option of simply muddling through.

It is partly because of the likely extreme outcomes – for example, Barclays' decision to sell off much of BZW immediately led to the assumption that the rest of Britain's investment banking business was doomed – that globalisation is widely seen as anything but a benign force.

Certainly, those involved in running government and in watching it have long been fearful of what they see as a threat to the nation state. Much of this has to do with the sheer size of companies such as Ford, General Motors, Sony, Unilever and Shell. As Rosabeth Moss Kanter, another US management thinker, points out in her book *World Class*, such organisations tend to be seen as "imperial corporations" that control the flow of money, goods and information across the world.

This is the thinking that goes along with the idea of large companies having larger annual revenues than the gross domestic products of many developing countries. And while Ms Moss Kanter regards it as probably "far fetched" to say that international corporations replace governments, she accepts that "their ability to operate effectively in more than one place gives them immense bargaining power in negotiations with governments".

Percy Barnevik: A businessman with the power to influence governments

She then quotes Percy Barnevik, the creator of Asea Brown Boveri, the Zurich-based engineer that has garnered shelves full of excellence awards without ever making much impact on the collective mind, as saying that his power to influence government was limited when he was merely head of Asea. But "today I can tell the Swedish authorities that they must create a more competitive environment for R&D or our research there will decline".

But it need not be all negative. The old slogan of "What's good for General Motors is good for America" signals the sort of approach that the Blair government seems to be buying into by seeking to forge as many partnerships as possible with the business community. Since business has such great power it might as well be harnessed for the greater good, it is implied.

Not that it is size alone that is driving the globalisation of business. For a start, many of the companies that are at the head of the globalisation bandwagon are smaller in terms of numbers of people employed than they were 10 or 20 years ago. Second, the development that is pushing the globalisation of business is new technology, in particular, the Internet.

While it might have been possible for some time for large organisations to use their economic power to buy what they want from wherever they want, such desires have been purely wishful thinking for the man or woman in the street until comparatively recently. Now, though, an ordinary consumer equipped with a personal computer and a modem can buy a book that until recently would only have been available in the United States or can bypass travel agents and book a room in a beachhouse on a Far Eastern island.

In short, the Internet is a great leveller. Just as it enables consumers to start enjoying the same sort of access to goods and services that has long been available to corporations, so it enables a just-founded company to have the same sort of global marketing reach as a well-established organisation employing thousands of people all over the globe.

The downside to this, of course, is that right from the start the little guy finds himself competing with the big boys. And the result is that – for all but a few exceptions – business success is set to be even more fleeting than in the past. Companies will be able to enjoy huge expansion in sales on the strength of dominating a technology or a niche of the market while constantly at risk from newcomers like themselves.

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

CLIFFORD GERMAN

The award for the best punch-up of the year goes to *The Sunday Telegraph* Christmas party. The pugilists in question were two of the City's more redoubtable PR men, **Brian Basham** of Basham and Coyle, and **David Burnside**, formerly of British Airways, who nowadays also runs his own PR agency.

The two men of course are old sparring partners from the golden days at BA and both featured in the "dirty tricks" saga involving the airline's arch rival Virgin Atlantic. At the time Burnside was running the press office and Basham was employed as BA's external public relations adviser.

Anyway, back to that office party, where Burnside's well-known sense of humour got the better of him while Basham lived up to his name in style. Horseplay between the two somehow got out of band and the Basham fist connected with the Burnside nose in spectacular fashion. "There was blood on the carpet," said one ex-journalist, though whether this was simply a red wine stain was hard to know.

Neil Bennett, *The Sunday Telegraph*'s City Editor, managed to despatch the two into separate cabs. Bizarrely, Basham and Burnside ended up staying in the same house, having apparently made up.

Ken Livingstone: A salvo from HMS Belfast

Evidently Fleet Street worked its calming Yuletide magic.

It all goes to show that Basham has not lost his capacity for the unexpected. Earlier this year he was involved in an incident at the Tower Thistle Hotel which resulted in one broken carpark security barrier and a rather embarrassed chauffeur being left to face the music and the hotel's less-than-amused security staff. Never a dull moment at Basham & Coyle these days.

And some news from another old bruiser. A fortnight hence **Ken Livingstone**, the former Labour leader of the Greater London Council and one of the leading candidates for post of Lord Mayor of London, will board HMS Belfast, the warship moored on the River Thames, to address the annual dinner given by RBS Advanta, the credit card people, for the financial press corps. Admirers of the veteran socialist are hoping Ken will deliver a critical broadside at the Government's economic policies to date.

The choice of speaker and venue could be suggestive. Belfast herself is the last of the big-gun cruisers that served in the Second World War. She celebrates her 60th birthday next March and has been moored in the Thames since she retired in 1971.

These days her 6 inch guns only fire blanks, and their next official duty will be to welcome the millennium, but I am told they could bombard Scratchwood service station on the M1 (or any other target of choice in the London area for that matter, I presume).

In the interests of even-handedness RBS Advanta has steered from hard a starboard to hard a port. Their last speaker, a year ago, was **Norman Lamont**, the former Conservative chancellor, who gave the then government's economic policies a good scuffing. Our Ken will speak on a subject of his own choice, of interest to the financial community, which presumably rules out newts, but the audience will be disappointed if they do not get at least a whiff of his no-nonsense speech-making.

Paren Knadjian the marketing director at Datastream/ICV, the financial information provider, tells me that Turkey topped his survey of best-performing stock markets in 1997, with a gain of 222 per cent in local currency, and 78 per cent in sterling. Turkey came in just ahead of Russia, up 212 per cent in roubles and the clear winner in sterling with a gain of 202 per cent.

Paren is remarkably cheerful about the result, bearing in mind his ancestors came from Armenia, which has historically had a hard time from its neighbours, eg Turkey and Russia.

Meanwhile, the real turkeys for sterling investors were the tiger economies, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea and the Philippines, plus Bangladesh, where the tigers actually live.

How many companies can boast a chairman who has won an Emmy? VFG can, for one. The AIM-quoted tiddler that rents out film-making and broadcasting equipment has landed **Richard Price** as its chairman. Sixty-four year old Mr Price is best known as the founder of Primetime, the UK's largest independent distributor of television programmes. He also warmed the chairman's seat at BAFTA between 1991 and 1993.

But the little statuettes – the highest honour the US television industry has to offer – were awarded a few years ago for *Nicholas Nickelby* and *Porgy and Bess*, two programmes produced by Primetime. It is only a matter of time before some desperate rival goes one better and puts an Oscar winner on the board. Sir **Anthony Hopkins** could play the part, surely.

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Sterling Spot	1 month	3 month	Dollar Spot	1 month	3 month	D-Mark Spot
UK	10000			05977	05985	06002	03346
Australia	25553	25529	25472	15273	15279	15288	08550
Austria	21029	20988	20931	12569	12567	12563	70361
Belgium	61644	61447	61073	36845	36775	36655	20626
Canada	24081	24022	23923	14393	14376	14358	08057
Denmark	11386	11352	11285	68057	67937	67729	38098
ECU	15105	15066	14987	11076	11091	11117	08107
Finland	90482	90176	89601	54082	53969	53777	30275
France	9993	9961	9899	59730	59613	59413	33437
Germany	29887	29792	29608	17864	17830	17771	10000
Greece	47128	47473	48150	28168	28412	28899	15769
Hong Kong	12966	12963	13024	77498	77580	78168	43383
Ireland	11578	11571	11538	14450	14441	14441	08089
Italy	29370	29336	2925.4	17555	1755.7	1755.8	982.73
Japan	21718	21593	21338	12981	12923	12807	72668
Malaysia	65082	64823	64722	38900	38795	38845	21776
Mexico	13610			81350			45540
Netherlands	33685	33573	33357	20134	20093	20021	11271
New Zealand	28673	28612	28488	05835	17124	17098	03266
Norway	12277	12236	12165	73382	73232	73012	41079
Portugal	30586	30506	30372	18270	18258	18229	10227
Saudi Arabia	62749	62672	62515	37506	37508	37521	20996
Singapore	27902	28042	28095	16678	16783	16863	09336
South Africa	81360	81912	82858	48630	49023	49730	27223
Spain	25298	25249	25133	15122	15111	15085	84650
Sweden	13122	13093	13036	78432	78359	78239	43906
Switzerland	24230	2410	23878	14483	14429	14332	08107
US	15731			10000			05598

Other Spot Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	16731	10000	Oman	05440	03650
Brazil	18665	11156	Pakistan	73614	44000
China	13836	82700	Philippines	66838	39950
Czech Rep	57528	34385	Poland	58507	34970
Egypt	56792	33945	Qatar	60695	36398
Ghana	37058	22150	Russia	99680	59580
Hungary	33863	20300	South Korea	22252	133000
India	65617	39220	Taiwan	54675	32680
Indonesia	90345	54000	Thailand	77379	46250
Kuwait	05094	03045	Turkey	342222	204550
Nigeria	12464	74500	UAE	61443	36725

Interest Rates

UK		Germany		US		Japan	
Base	7.25%	Discount	2.50%	Prime	8.50%	Discount	0.50%
France		Lombard	4.50%	Discount	5.00%	Belgium	
Intervention	3.30%	Canada		Fed Funds	5.56%	Discount	2.75%
Italy		Prime	6.00%	Spain		Central	3.30%
Discount	5.50%	Discount	4.50%	10-d Repo	4.75%	Switzerland	
Netherlands		Denmark		Sweden		Discount	1.00%
SpAdvance	3.30%	Discount	3.50%	Repo(Ave)	4.35%	Lombard	3.13%

Bond Yields

Country	3 mth	chg	1 yr	chg	2 yr	chg	5 yr	chg	10 yr	chg
Australia	4.97	..	4.76	0.01	5.11	0.01	5.61	0.02	5.91	-0.03
Belgium	3.61	-0.03	4.00	-0.08	4.02	-0.07	4.73	-0.01	5.36	0.00
Canada	4.25	-0.10	5.17	-0.02	5.20	0.01	5.44	0.01	5.67	0.00
ECU	4.42	0.00	4.55	-0.03	4.50	0.05	4.89	-0.01	5.37	0.01
France	0.00	0.00	3.70	0.00	4.16	0.01	4.64	0.01	5.23	0.01
Germany	3.67	0.00	3.95	0.00	4.17	0.05	4.78	0.03	5.26	0.03
Italy	4.97	0.27	5.02	0.08	4.94	0.09	5.10	0.04	5.60	0.05
Japan	0.35	-0.03	0.55	0.00	0.62	0.00	1.21	0.00	1.92	0.00
N'lands	3.63	-0.04	3.94	0.00	4.11	0.02	4.75	0.04	5.21	0.02
Spain	4.65	0.00	4.48	0.00	4.49	0.05	4.93	0.02	5.51	0.03
Sweden	4.32	-0.03	5.00	0.00	5.03	0.02	5.67	0.01	5.96	0.02
S'land	1.61	-0.01	1.88	0.00	1.56	0.00	2.40	0.02	3.26	0.05
UK	7.00	0.00	7.69	0.00	6.76	0.02	6.47	0.03	6.20	0.00
US	5.24	0.00	5.24	0.01	5.68	0.01	5.73	0.02	5.75	0.01

Money Market Rates

	Overnight Bid	Overnight Offer	1 week Bid	1 week Offer	1 month Bid	1 month Offer	3 months Bid	3 months Offer	6 months Bid	6 months Offer	1 year Bid	1 year Offer
Treasury Bills					7.15	7.00	7.15	7.00				
LIBOR												
Domestic Depos	7.19	7.31	7.25	7.38	7.38	7.50	7.50	7.56	7.56	7.59	7.53	7.59
Eurosterling Deps	7.03	7.15	7.13	7.19	7.47	7.53	7.51	7.53	7.54	7.59	7.56	7.63
Eligible Bank Bills					7.20	7.12	7.29	7.21	7.38	7.30		
Sterling CDs					7.46	7.40	7.58	7.50	7.60	7.52	7.60	7.52
Eurodollar CDs					5.83		5.83		5.83			
ECU Deposits					4.19	4.38	4.25	4.44	4.31	4.50		

www.bloomberg.com Source: Bloomberg

Liffe Financial Futures

Contract		Settlement	High	Low	Est floor volume	Open interest
Long Gilt	Mar-98	12200	12216	12181	6923	179787
German Bund	Mar-98	10488	10513	10480	18783	239305
US Long Bond	Mar-98	11953	–	–	–	–
Italian Bond	Mar-98	11635	11640	11611	8496	119449
Japan Govt Bd	Mar-98	12989	12996	12989	173	–
3 Mth Sterling	Mar-98	9245	9247	9245	6228	139839
	Jun-98	9257	9259	9256	6366	108698
3 Mth Euromark	Mar-98	9622	9624	9622	11172	370904
	Jun-98	9610	9613	9609	12947	330394
3 Mth Eurolira	Mar-98	9467	9470	9467	6469	152145
	Jun-98	9536	9537	9535	2910	129224
3 Mth Euroyen	Mar-98	9909	9911	9909	860	–
3 Mth Euroswiss	Mar-98	9833	9833	9830	2008	71001
	Jun-98	9818	9819	9816	973	30229
3 Mth ECU	Mar-98	9557	9556	9556	36	9155
	Mar-98	9557	9560	9550	3	6199
FTSE 100	Dec-98	503850	–	–	–	15923

Liffe FTSE 100 Index Option

Settlement Price: 511240

Series	Mar Call	Imp Vol	Put	Imp Vol	Dec Call	Put	Jan Call	Put	Feb Call	Put
5050	379	28	179	28	68	2	236	60	353	132
5100	347	28	198	28	18	1	198	73	317	147
5150	316	27	218	28	131	51	161	89	285	165
5200	286	27	238	28	10	101	130	110	252	186

Energy

* at 5:30pm

Brent Crude($/barrel) IPE	Last*	Chg	Vol	Gas oil($/tonne) IPE	Close	Chg	Vol	WTI Crude($/barrel) NYM	Last*	Chg	Products($/tonne) Spot CIF NW Eur	
Feb	1692	_	14358	Jan	15250		7404	Jan	1839		Gasoline 95	17600
Mar	1707	.	4808	Feb	15425	-	3517	Feb	1784	-038	Naphtha	16600
Apr	1718	_	4202	Mar	15600		1969	Mar	1804	-029	Gasoil	15900
								Apr	1822	-024	Fuel Oil (3.5%)	7600

Commodity Indices

Goldman Sachs at 5:30pm

	Base date	Last	Chg	%chg	31 Dec	%chgYTD
Index	1970=100	17738	-117	-066	21526	-1760
Agricultural	1970=100	23041	-055	-024	23123	-035
Energy	1983=100	6375	-035	-055	8586	-2575
Ind Metals	1977=100	15574	000	000	16879	-773
Livestock	1970=100	17497	-107	-061	19103	-841
Prec Metals	1973=100	38371	-508	-127	46354	-1506

Industrial Metals

LME ($/tonne)	Cash		Chg	3 month		Chg	LME stocks	Chg
Aluminium HG	1493	1494	..	1522	1523	..	627150	1100
Aluminium Alloy	1355	1365	..	1375	1385	..	42440	-40
Copper A	1696	1697	..	1726	1727	..	333625	2100
Lead	5275	5285	..	534	536	..	111775	-300
Nickel	5875	5885	..	5975	5980	..	86204	102
Tin	5330	5340	..	5355	5360	..	12790	200
Zinc	1086	1087	..	1109	1110	..	493100	200

Precious Metals

pm fix/$ per oz		Day's chg	Year's chg	pm fix/£ per oz		Day's chg	Year's chg	Coins ($)		Year's chg
Platinum	36350	1050	-600	Platinum	21700	510	-335	Krugrands	29385	-7500
Palladium	19800	1300	8100	Palladium	11820	775	4935	Sovs	6905	
Silver	624	021	136	Silver	372	010	083	Nobles	35505	
Gold	29305	055	-7635					Maple Leaf	30785	-7375

Agricultural

* at 5:30pm

Cocoa LIFFE	£/tonne	Coffee LIFFE	$/tonne	Barley LIFFE	£/tonne	Potatoes LIFFE	£/tonne	Lge Potatoes ATA	£/25k kg
Mar98	105700	Jan98	169700	Jan98	7410	Mar98	9200	A Sec	68325
May98	106100	Mar98	168500	Mar98	7710	Apr98	11600	Apr98	68500
Jul98	110000	May98	167200	May98	7810	May98	12600	Jun98	69050
Vol:	1246	Vol:	2610	Vol:	20	Vol:	45	Vol:	53740

White Sugar* LIFFE	$/tonne	Freight LIFFE	$10/pt	Wheat LIFFE	£/tonne	Corn* CBOT	Cents/bshl	Soya Beans* CBOT	$/5k bshls
Mar98	30880	Jan98	116000	Jan98	8050	Mar98	26750	Jan98	-
May98	31370	Feb98	117500	Mar98	8325	May98	27550	Mar98	3120
Aug98	31500	Apr98	125800	May98	8525	Jul98	28100	May98	3420
Vol:	1155	Vol:	10	Vol:	114	Vol:	48250	Vol:	360

Other Softs

at 5:30pm

Feb	Live Cattle	(CME) $/40k lb	6683	Mar	White Maize	(SAF) $/100 mt	94800
Feb	Pork Bellies	(CME) $/40k lb	5425	Jan	Rubber	(TCM) Y/ 5k kg	8170
Mar	Orange Juice	(CTN) $/15k lb	9000	Mar	Cotton	(CTN) $/50k lb	6742
Feb	Milk	(CSC) $/50k lb	1433	Feb	Crude Palm	(KLC) $/25 tn	207800
Mar	Oats	(CBT) $/5k bsh	15200	Mar	Soya Oil	(CBT) $/60k lb	2540
Mar	Flax	(WCE) $/20 tn	34830	Jan	Woollen Yarn	(TCM) $/500kg	125500

Latest Unit Trust Prices

Fund	Sell	Buy	Yld
AIB Govett Trust Ltd			
4 Battle Bridge Lane, London SE1 2HR			
Tel: 0171 378 7979			
American Strategy	21654	23169	0.00
Cash	957	962	5.75
European Strategy	13782	14739	0.00
FTSE Mid 250 Index	9679	10350	2.11
Geared UK Index	2241	2386	5.78
Greater China	18968	20288	0.00
International Growth	15942	17048	0.00
Japan General	10080	10660	0.00
Monthly Income	4177	4478	8.72X
Pacific Strategy	10318	11034	0.00
UK Bear	488	515	5.25
UK Eq Safeguard	10858	11612	2.47
UK Index	1709	1805	5.25
UK Safeguard	13605	14498	0.00
UK Smaller Cos	7856	8401	0.49
US Index	2258	2379	4.00
AXA Equity & Law Unit Trust Managers			
AXA Equity & Law Hse,			
Corporation St, Coventry CV1 1GD			
Tel: 01203 553231			
Balanced Acc	7175	7632	2.42
Balanced Inc	6564	6982	2.42
Brit Excel	11440	12160	2.29
BritishFndmtlsAcc	14380	15290	4.55
BritishFndmtlsInc	9226	9814	4.55
Europe	43980	46750	0.60
Gilts&Fixed Int	9712	10260	5.59
Gilts&FixedIntAcc	23320	24830	5.59
Global Opps	10680	11360	0.31
Higher Inc Acc	105800	112500	4.85
Higher Inc Inc	54840	57800	4.85
Japan	3232	3438	0.00
North America	39760	42290	0.00
Pacific Basin	27040	28760	2.32
UK Gwth Acc	57500	61160	2.54
UK Gwth Inc	36340	38650	2.54
Barclays Funds Limited			
4 Broadway, Stratford, London, E15 4BJ			
Customer Help Desk: 0181 522 4900			
Balanced Trusts			
Income Funds			
Cash	10000	10000	6.74X
Cash Acc.	13150	13150	6.74X
Income	69950	74610	4.03
Income Builder	8083	8606	4.86
Balanced Funds			
100	51830	55520	2.12
Europe	10390	11050	2.25
General	39890	42540	1.76
Property	26480	28410	5.68X
Trustee	27850	29630	1.71X
Growth Funds UK			
Capital	17900	19040	1.87
FTSE 100	12850	13640	1.82X
Growth Acc	55870	59440	1.54
Smlr Cos Acc	7309	7796	2.41
Smlr Cos Inc	6068	6473	2.41
Growth Funds - Overseas			
America	22330	23600	0.04X
AmericanRecAcc	15630	16560	0.00
Japan Acc	8853	9356	0.00
Japan Inc	8752	9250	0.00
Japan Spec Sits	3950	4184	0.00
Worldwide	20710	21990	0.99

Fund	Sell	Buy	Yld
Barclays Investment Portfolios (1200)F			
High Income Inc	5102	5130	7.10
Managed Income	4945	5114	7.10
Mgd Gwth&Income	4706	4896	4.50
Managed Growth	4593	4812	0.50
Barclays Global Investors Funds			
PO Box 14928 London E15 4UG			
Brokerline: 0800 731 2443			
Income Funds			
Distribution	12620	12880	5.36X
Equity Income	16820	17940	4.32
Gilt&FixedIntInc	6326	6551	7.01X
InternatnlFixedInt	10040	10390	4.88
InternatnlFxdIntAcc	12740	13170	4.88
Growth Funds - UK			
Gwth & Inc Acc	112700	116900	1.74
Gwth & Inc Inc	52070	55400	1.74
UK Growth	51030	54280	1.81
UK Growth Acc	51010	54280	1.81
Growth Funds - Overseas			
European Growth	23480	24830	0.71
Europn Gwth Acc	25700	27190	0.71
FarEastnGrowth	11310	12030	1.06X
FarEastGwthAcc	18200	20420	1.06
Baring Fund Managers Ltd			
PO Box 831, 197 Bishopsgate,			
London EC2M 3YS			
Enq: 0171 762 8450, Dealing: 0171 214 1004			
American Gwth	17220	18180	0.00X
AmericanSmlrCos	16030	17050	0.00X
Eastern	16480	17670	0.30X
Equity Income	12350	13170	4.20X
EuropeanGwth	47330	50560	0.80X
EuropeanSelect	41900	44800	0.80X
German Gwth	10220	10820	0.50X
Global Bond	7464	7850	4.80X
Global Growth	16650	17670	0.40X
Income Plus	5408	5420	7.60X
Japan Growth	9825	10400	0.00X
Japan Sunrise	7398	7838	0.00X
Korea	2061	2238	0.00X
Portfolio Acc	33180	35250	2.00X
Portfolio Inc	17170	18250	2.00X
Select Managers	9306	9950	1.00X
UK Growth	13200	14110	1.80X
UK Gwth & Inc	6216	8298	4.20X
UK Smlr Cos	12270	13310	1.00X
Charity Fund			
OverseasGwthEx	6968	7047	0.80X
Friends Provident Unit Trust Managers Ltd			
United Kingdom Hse, Castle St,			
Salisbury, Wiltshire SP1 3SH			
Enq: 01722 715834, Dealing: 01722 715805			
Amer Smlr Cos	21560	22980	0.00
American	7653	8156	0.00
American Acc	8578	9039	0.00
Asian Gwth	16590	17690	0.00
Asian Gwth Acc	17320	18470	0.00
Australian	4130	43870	0.00
Australian Acc	46870	49990	0.00
CapGwthIncAcc	14150	15050	2.63
CapGwthIncInc	13070	13900	2.63
Capital Gwth	14190	15090	0.57
Equity Acc	126000	134400	1.92
Equity Dist	56200	58870	1.92
EthicUKEqExAc	12770	12830	2.61
EthicUKEqExIn	13460	13520	2.51

Fund	Sell	Buy	Yld
Eurpn Gwth Acc	40030	43010	0.00
Eurpn Gwth Distrb	36810	39260	0.00
Income	7015	7482	4.31
Income Acc	26070	27800	4.31
Instl UK Smlr Cos	12130	12700	1.52
InstUkSmlrCosAcc	12440	13020	1.52
International Bond	5734	6046	3.96
Intl Bond Acc	16300	17240	3.96
Intl Growth	4186	4465	0.05
Intl Growth Acc	6172	6583	0.05
Jap Smlr Cos	15340	16360	0.00
Monthly Distrb	8634	9209	4.79
MonthlyDistrbAcc	16510	17610	4.79
OpnCptGthIncAcc	14850	15800	3.64
OpnCptlGwth	14000	14890	0.19
OpnCptlGwthIncInc	13530	14380	3.84
PacificBasinAcc	16450	17540	0.20
SterlingDepositAcc	12240	12240	6.39
SterlingDepositInc	10130	10130	6.39
Stewardship	47740	50920	1.40
Stwrdshp Acc	61150	66270	1.40
Stwrdshp Inc	7832	8354	5.16
Stwrdshp IncAcc	11410	12170	5.16
Stwrdshp N Am	15230	16240	0.00
Stwrdshp N Am Acc	16380	17470	0.00
Tokyo Acc	6195	6608	0.00
Tokyo Inc	6130	6542	0.00
UK Focus	5179	5524	1.44
UK Focus Acc	6476	6907	1.44
UK Growth	24480	26110	1.52
UK Growth Acc	50400	53750	1.52
HSBC Unit Trust Management Ltd			
6 Bevis Marks, London EC3A 7QP			
Advsrs:0800 181890, Invstrs:0800 289505			
Dealing: 0171 955 5055			
Benton Fund	11880	12620	1.09
Elm Growth	9854	10400	2.40X
Benton Fund initial charge 6 per cent			
Elm Growth initial charge 5.25 per cent			
Hill Samuel Exempt Umbrella Trust			
European Acc	26630	27770	1.33X
Japan Acc	3086	3220	0.00X
North Amer Acc	30410	31620	0.61X
Pacific Acc	4671	4860	3.26X
UK Equity Acc	37430	39030	2.37X
UkSmlrCosAcc	16900	17970	2.07X
Legal & General (UT Managers) Ltd			
Knox Court, 10 Fitzalan Place			
Cardiff CF2 1TL			
Enq: 01222 448412, Dealing: 01222 483512			
http:www.legal-and-general.co.uk			
Cash	6273	6273	6.86X
Equity Acc	153900	153900	2.03
Equity Distrb	72810	72810	2.03
Equity Income	12440	12440	4.59
European	17720	17720	0.15
Eurpn Index	11290	11290	1.01
Far Eastern	15040	15040	0.00
Fixed Int	5916	5916	7.23X
Gilt	9930	9930	5.91X
Global Growth	8014	8014	0.42
Intl Bond	4852	4852	5.01
Japan Index	2408	2409	0.00
Japanese	5057	5057	0.00X
Nth American	27670	27670	0.00
Pacific Gwth	7561	7561	0.90
Pacific Index	3106	3106	3.25X

Fund	Sell	Buy	Yld
UK Index	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
UK Index Acc	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
UK Recovery	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
UK Smll Cos	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
UK StockMarketAcc	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Fund	Sell	Buy	Yld
UK Tactical	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
US Index	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Worldwide	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Worldwide Acc	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lloyds Bank Unit Trust Managers Ltd			
Mountbatten House, Chatham			
Kent, ME4 4JF			
Tel: [illegible]			
Balanced	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.85
Balanced Acc	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.85
ContEurGwthAcc	[illegible]	[illegible]	0.00
ContEurpeGwth	[illegible]	[illegible]	0.00
Extra Inc	[illegible]	[illegible]	3.36X
Extra Inc Acc	[illegible]	[illegible]	3.38
FTSE 100	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.99
FTSE 100 Acc	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.99
German Gwth	[illegible]	[illegible]	0.00

Fund	Sell	Buy	Yld
GermanGwthAcc	17690	18630	0.00
Gwth Pfolio	76540	81540	0.14
Gwth Pfolio Acc	80720	85880	0.14
High Int	11030	11440	6.60X
High Int Acc	12580	13040	6.60
Inc Pfolio	67800	71820	3.84
Inc Pfolio Acc	73230	84290	3.84
Income	68360	72730	3.04
Income Acc	201100	214000	3.04
Japan Gwth	7242	7705	0.00
Japan Gwth Acc	7257	7731	0.00
MasterTrust	7619	8106	1.33X
MasterTrust Acc	8951	9523	1.33
Millennium	11460	12200	2.02
NAmSmCos&RecAcc	23360	24860	0.00
NAmSmCos&RecInc	22880	24350	0.00
NthAmer&Gen	30270	32210	0.37
NthAmer&GenAcc	35030	37270	0.37
Pacific Basin	15680	16860	0.83
PacificBasinAcc	16710	17780	0.83
Premier Exempt	19840	20730	2.83
Safety First	11590	12200	1.44
SmlrCos&Rcvry	53840	56780	2.02
SmlrCos&RecAcc	75740	79730	2.02
UK Eqty Inc	16110	17140	3.65
UK Equity Gwth	20270	21570	2.42
UK Growth	12870	13700	1.73
UK Growth Acc	16430	17480	1.79
W'wideGwth	39090	41690	0.44X
W'wideGwthAcc	57870	61570	0.44
Newton Fund Managers Ltd			
2 Festival Square, Edinburgh EH3 9SU			
Clients 0800 614330, Broker 0500 660000,			
Dealing, 0500 440000			
Internet: information@newton.co.uk			
American Gwth Acc	6242	6640	0.00
American Gwth Inc	6134	6589	0.00
Bridge	11484	12217	2.09
Cash Acc	7334	7334	6.79
Cash Inc	5043	5043	6.79
Distributor	12649	13456	1.90
European	7489	7986	0.00
Foundation	12687	13496	1.21
General	25774	27419	1.08
General Acc	28324	29004	1.08
Growth Acc	17258	18359	1.08
Growth Inc	16504	17557	1.08
Higher Inc Acc	5305	5643	4.02
Higher Income	4184	4451	4.02
Income	34534	36738	2.48
Intl Bond	13259	14105	4.52
Intl Growth	4310	4585	0.00
Japan	2185	2324	0.00
Oriental	10713	11393	0.61
Oriental Acc	11107	11815	0.61
Northern Rock Unit Trusts Ltd			
Bulman House, Regent Centre Gosforth			
Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 3NG.			
Tel: (0191) 285 2555			
High Income	5706	6039	5.39
UK Growth	13670	14470	2.49
Prudential Unit Trusts Ltd			
51-59 Ilford Hill, Ilford, Essex, IG1 2DL			
IFA Dealing 0345 835505			
Client Dealing 0345 835500			
Cash Haven	10152	10201	6.14X
Cash Haven Acc	12535	12597	6.14

Fund	Sell	Buy	Yld
Distribution Acc	14020	14529	4.70
Distribution Inc	11739	12165	4.70
Equity	106305	113090	1.67
Equity Inc	10505	11178	3.78X
European	34077	36373	0.54X
Global Growth	11433	12163	1.57
High Income	10567	11241	4.55X
Intl Growth	22449	23882	1.01
Intl Small Cos	9387	9986	0.86
Japanese	10236	10587	0.00
Managed	4824	4899	2.00
Managed Inc	5033	5208	7.26X
Nth American	28931	30874	0.91X
Pacific Mkts	8009	8293	1.72
Premier Inc	5089	5287	5.47
Small Cos	11720	12468	1.56
Special Sits	14653	15588	1.71X
UK Growth	18027	19178	1.66
Save & Prosper Securities Ltd			
16-22 Western Rd, Romford, Essex RM1 3LB			
Clients: 0800 829 100			
Brokerline: 0800 727 770			
Amer Smlr Cos	16800	17880	0.00
Cash	14350	14350	6.52X
China Dragon	5775	6144	0.25
Commodity	10810	11500	0.00
Emerg Mkts	3540	3766	0.53
Europn Growth	29340	31210	0.08X
Europn Smlr Cos	7616	8102	0.00X
Extra Income	6489	6832	5.05X
Far Eastern Gwth	6911	7352	0.00
FarEasnSmlCos	3450	3670	0.93
Financial Secs	42220	44920	1.22X
Gold & Explorstn	3641	3873	0.00
Growth	54230	54500	1.43
High Income	5369	5369	6.03X
Intl Bond	15800	16490	5.12
ITU	25610	27240	1.01
Japan Growth	10830	11450	0.00
Japan Smlr Cos	8834	9372	0.00
Korea	1382	1470	0.00
Latin America	4804	5111	0.07
Masterfund	7043	7076	0.88X
New Europe	5033	(Mid)	0.00
Premier Eqty Inc	44800	47450	3.80X
PremierEqtyGwth	20880	22210	1.16
S E Asia Gwth	3061	3256	0.25
Southern Africa	4400	4681	1.22
UK & Ovseas	22300	23720	0.71
UK Equity Inc	31990	34020	3.82
UK EquityGwth&Inc	37270	39650	2.68
UK Smlr Cos	6547	6965	0.90
US Growth	27720	29490	0.00
Scottish Amicable Pension Funds			
PO Box 14962 Craigforth Stirling, FK9 4ZD			
01786 448844			
95%SafeguardPens	11090	(Mid)	0.00
100%SafeguardPens	10270	(Mid)	0.00
WealthPrsvtnCap	11090	(Mid)	0.00
WealthPrsvtnInc	2370	(Mid)	0.00
Singer & Friedlander Inv Funds Ltd			
21 New Street, London EC2M 4HR			
Tel: 0171 867 8777, Dealing: 0171 626 6226			
***SIB Recognised Dublin OEIC Funds**			
American Growth	16360	(Mid)	0.00
Aztec	7927	(Mid)	0.00
Corporate Income	10303	(Mid)	0.00

Fund	Sell	Buy	Yld
Deutschmark Res	10161	(Mid)	0.00
European	19184	(Mid)	0.00
Football Fund	8351	(Mid)	0.00
Global Bond	8933	(Mid)	0.00
Investment Trust	11891	(Mid)	0.00
Reserve Roll Up Fund	10250	(Mid)	0.00
Samurai	3822	(Mid)	0.00
Sterling Reserve	10240	(Mid)	0.00
Tai Pan	7549	(Mid)	0.00
UK Emerg Leaders	9880	(Mid)	0.00
UK Equity Income	10637	(Mid)	0.00
UK Growth	12349	(Mid)	0.00
Singer & Friedlander Unit Mgrs Ltd			
Continent	10960	11580	1.00X
Global Gwth PEP	8862	9355	1.00X
InvestmtTrustPfolio	6236	6632	2.20X
Lugano	9827	10730	1.50X
Managed Ex	145161	154785	2.20X
Preferred Inc	10980	11880	8.10X
Smll Cos	28780	30610	0.90X
Standard Life Unit Trusts			
30 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh EH1 2DH			
Tel: 0800 33 33 53			
GlobalAdvntge	5052	5078	1.14
GlobalAdvntgeAcc	5547	5578	1.14
IncAdvntgeAcc	5211	5238	3.54
IncAdvntgeInc	4285	4307	3.54X
Managed Acc	6957	7386	1.89
Premier Inc	5358	5545	6.35X
Premier Inc Acc	6156	6374	6.35
UKEqtyGwthAcc	12090	12820	1.21
UKEqtyHighInc Inc	5073	5370	3.56
UKEqtyHighIncAcc	7009	7430	3.56
Virgin Direct			
Discovery House, Whiting Road, Norwich			
Tel: 0345 95 95 95			
Email: mail@virgin-direct.co.uk			
Pen Growth Acc	12582	12582	0.00X
Pen Inc Protector	11406	11406	0.00X
PFS Income	11240	11240	5.86
PFS UKIndexTracking	16083	16083	1.43

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X - ex-dividend
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Istabraq cruising towards Champion

A top-flight British contender for the Champion Hurdle has yet to emerge, but in Ireland it is a different story. ***Richard Edmondson*** **reports.**

When the mind turns to the 1998 Cheltenham Gold Cup it is almost inevitable that the palms come together also and create a crackle of anticipation. Dorans Pride, The Grey Monk, Imperial Call, Suny Bay and See More Business have all advertised this year that the Blue Riband may be a cavalry charge of excellence at the foot of Prestbury Hill on 19 March.

It has been rather less easy to get emotional about the Champion Hurdle. Make A Stand, last season's victor, has already been invalided out of the race, and there has been no freshly scrubbed British dauphin forcing himself under the crown. Shadow Leader, Sanmartino and Wahiba Sands, pretenders three, have hardly covered themselves in glory recently.

The ante-post favourite for hurdling's championship kept his claims in place yesterday however, when Istabraq lengthened his winning sequence to eight at Leopardstown to further suggest the prize may well be returning to Ireland.

Istabraq is clearly reading the scripts that are tossed over the door of his box at Aidan O'Brien's yard. The plan all year has been for the five-year-old to follow a programme of four races before the Festival, a preparation culminating in the Irish Champion Hurdle, also at Leopardstown, next month.

It was not quite so straightforward when the horse appeared at Cheltenham in March. The former Flat inmate with John Gosden was made 6-5 favourite for the Royal SunAlliance Novices' Hurdle, a price that looked faintly ridiculous when he sweated up like a pig in a hammock before the race.

The three-quarters brother to Secreto, the 1984 Derby winner, was last of 16 as the field passed the grandstand, but then showed he was no Flat-bred dilettante as he survived a mid-air collision with Forest Ivory at the second last before responding to Charlie Swan's serious encouragement on the run-in.

Swan did nor have to be half as nasty yesterday. Sent off at 1-6, Istabraq picked his way through the Leopardstown quagmire to beat Punting Pete by a hard-held two and a half lengths. It was about as physically demanding as a game of draughts. "Istabraq did it well in dreadful going and there was no point in punishing him," O'Brien said. "He comes back here for the Irish Champion Hurdle and then it is Cheltenham after for the Smurfit Champion Hurdle."

When those days come there will be a little, splay-footed character who will be treated with the greatest of respect by the bookmakers. J P McManus, Istabraq's owner, may not be the most physically daunting figure to roam the racecourse but he is still just about the most feared. "Istabraq looked great today," JP said. "He is holding his condition well and seems to be enjoying his racing even more, as he has looked quicker and stronger each time this season."

The other horse to provide the wattage at gloomy Leopardstown yesterday was Florida Pearl, like Istabraq an animal who received laurels over his neck at Cheltenham in the spring.

The Festival bumper winner is not about to mess around with anything as inconsequential as flights of timber, and yesterday he beat a large field on his chasing debut. Florida Pearl, it must be said, is no stranger to considerable obstacles being placed in his way as he is a former point-to-point winner.

The even-money favourite had been schooled at the racetrack previously by Richard Dunwoody, who was again at the controls as his mount won by 20 lengths. "He has scope and size and the plan I agreed with Richard was that they would be up there with the pace and out of trouble," Willie Mullins, the winning trainer, said. "Once they had jumped the first two so well I was able to relax.


J P McManus: feared figure

"He was very quick out there and I loved the way he sprinted home from the last when Richard asked him to lengthen. He has advised us to enter the horse in the Cathcart Cup as well as the Arkle Trophy and the SunAlliance Chase at Cheltenham."

As connections congratulated themselves on their great good fortune in the Leopardstown winners' enclosure there was also talk of yet another contest. Florida Pearl is such a promising beast that those around him are already asking for prices about the 1999 Cheltenham Gold Cup.

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Goodtime George
(Stratford 3.50)
NB: Denham Hill
(Stratford 2.50)

Alabang may miss Ladbroke

Maurice Camacho yesterday warned that the leading fancy Alabang is "less than 50-50" to run in the Ladbroke at Leopardstown a week on Saturday. "He is not a wonderful traveller and that is what sticks in the craw," Camacho said. "I am also with without a jockey as Jamie Osborne is out and I am unlikely to be able to get Richard Johnson to cross the Irish Sea."

RACING'S FUTURES MARKET

Following his victory in the King George VI Chase at Kempton on Boxing Day, **See More Business**, who promises to be even more effective over a longer distance at a stiffer course such as Cheltenham is an attractively-priced 12-1 for the Gold Cup with most firms although Coral are taking no chances and quote him at 7-1. **Imperial Call** is 10-1 with Coral and Ladbrokes following Sunday's bloodless success at Leopardstown.

Istabraq is 9-2 with Coral and William Hill for the Champion Hurdle after his win at Leopardstown yesterday, while **Shadow Leader** is 6-1 generally after finishing second to Kerawi in the Christmas Hurdle at Kempton.

Rainwatch is 14-1 with the Tote for the Triumph Hurdle after his success in the Finale Junior Hurdle at Chepstow, while Upgrade is 33-1 with Coral and Ladbrokes after his easy win at Kempton.

Commanche Court is 6-1 favourite with Coral for The Ladbroke after escaping a penalty for his length win over Hard News at Leopardstown on Sunday and 10-1 with the Tote for Newbury's Tote Gold Trophy Handicap Hurdle.

However, the one that really catches the eye in their list is Christmas Hurdle winner **Kerawi** (7-1), who beat Shadow Leader by threequarters of a length at level weights at Kempton and, despite a 4lb penalty, is 12lb better off at Newbury.

The Tote bet on the Tote Gold Trophy Handicap Hurdle: 7-1 Kerawi, 10-1 Commanche Court, 12-1 Alabang, Bellator, Marello, Shadow Leader, Shooting Light, Tibetan, 14-1 Cadougold, Grimes, Mr Percy, Sharpical, Toast The Spreece, 16-1 Barna Boy, Carlito Brigante, Graphic Design, Indefence, Juyush, Major Jamie, Nahrawali, Princeful, Top Cees, 20-1 Finnegan's Hollow, Native-Darrig. *(Newbury, 14 February)*.

William Hill bet on the Queen Mother Champion Chase: 11-4 Ask Tom, 3-1 Viking Flagship, 9-2 Klairon Davis, 5-1 One Man, 7-1 Mulligan, 10-1 Or Royal, 14-1 Squire Silk, 20-1 Celibate, call Equiname, 33-1 Arctic Kinsman, Lord Dorcet. *(Cheltenham, 18 March)*.

— Ian Davies

Ladbroke Handicap Hurdle (2m)

Horse (Trainer/weight)	Coral	William Hill	Ladbrokes	Tote
Commanche Court (T Walsh/10st12lb)	8-1	5-1	4-1	5-1
Graphic Equaliser (A Moore/10st)	10-1	16-1	8-1	10-1
Alabang (M Camacho (GB)/10st)	12-1	14-1	doubtful	12-1
Sharpical (N Henderson(GB)/10st6lb)	14-1	12-1	10-1	14-1
Arctic Weather (M O'Brien/10st)	16-1	16-1	16-1	14-1
Hard News (D Kelly/9st6lb)	14-1	14-1	14-1	16-1
Major Jamie (A Moore/10st1lb)	12-1	16-1	14-1	16-1
Tibetan (Lady Herries (GB)/10st12lb)	14-1	14-1	16-1	16-1
Toast The Spreece (A P O'Brien/11st3lb)	14-1	16-1	14-1	14-1
Balladur (Mrs J Pitman (GB)/9st3lb)	25-1	25-1	25-1	20-1
Broken Rites (W Roper/9st4lb)	16-1	20-1	20-1	25-1
Carlito Brigante (P Webber (GB)/10st2lb)	20-1	25-1	25-1	25-1
Circus Star (D Nicholson (GB)/10st11lb)	25-1	25-1	25-1	20-1
Metastasio (D McArdle/9st13lb)	25-1	25-1	16-1	20-1
All The Vowels (J Mulhern/9st7lb)	25-1	25-1	33-1	25-1
Bolino Star (S J Treacy/10st10lb)	20-1	20-1	33-1	25-1
Fiddlers Bow VI (N Meade/9st8lb)	33-1	33-1	—	25-1
Gazalani (P O'Brady/10st5lb)	20-1	33-1	33-1	25-1

NB: Minimum weight 9st 7lb. Each-way ¼ the odds, places, 1, 2, 3, 4 (Leopardstown, Saturday, 10 January)

Champion Hurdle (2m 110yds)

Horse (Trainer)	Coral	William Hill	Ladbrokes	Tote
Istabraq (A P O'Brien/Ir)	9-2	9-2	4-1	4-1
Shadow Leader (C Egerton)	6-1	6-1	6-1	5-1
Collier Bay (J Old)	10-1	10-1	8-1	12-1
Sanmartino (D Nicholson)	10-1	12-1	12-1	11-1
Relkeel (D Nicholson)	10-1	14-1	10-1	11-1
Grey Shot (I Balding)	16-1	16-1	16-1	12-1
Grimes (C Roche/Ir)	20-1	25-1	16-1	16-1
Marello (Mrs M Reveley)	25-1	25-1	25-1	20-1
Pridwell (M Pipe)	25-1	20-1	25-1	20-1
I'm Supposin (R Rowe)	25-1	33-1	—	25-1
Dato Star (J M Jefferson)	16-1	40-1	40-1	25-1

Each-way a quarter the odds, places, 1, 2, 3 (Cheltenham, Tuesday, 17 March)

Triumph Hurdle (2m 1f)

Horse (Trainer)	Coral	William Hill	Ladbrokes	Tote
Rainbow Frontier (A P O'Brien/Ir)	14-1	10-1	10-1	8-1
Rainwatch (M Pipe)	10-1	10-1	10-1	14-1
Buddy Marvel (O Sherwood)	20-1	16-1	14-1	20-1
Khairabar (C Roche/Ir)	16-1	15-1	20-1	20-1
Sound Appeal (A Foster)	16-1	16-1	20-1	15-1
Vent D'Aout (M Pipe)	16-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
The French Furze (M Pipe)	20-1	25-1	25-1	20-1
Upgrade (N Twiston-Davies)	33-1	25-1	33-1	20-1
Real Estate (D Nicholson)	20-1	25-1	40-1	16-1

Each-way a quarter the odds, places, 1, 2, 3 (Cheltenham, Thursday, 19 March)

Cheltenham Gold Cup Chase (3m 2f 110yds)

Horse (Trainer)	Coral	William Hill	Ladbrokes	Tote
Dorans Pride (M Hourigan/Ir)	9-2	4-1	4-1	5-1
The Grey Monk (G Richards)	6-1	6-1	5-1	6-1
Imperial Call (F Sutherland/Ir)	16-1	7-1	16-1	6-1
Suny Bay (C Brooks)	16-1	6-1	6-1	6-1
See More Business (P Nicholls)	7-1	12-1	12-1	12-1
Rough Quest (T Casey)	14-1	16-1	16-1	12-1
Addington Boy (G Richards)	16-1	20-1	20-1	14-1
Challenger Du Luc (M Pipe)	25-1	25-1	25-1	25-1
Strong Promise (G Hubbard)	16-1	20-1	25-1	20-1
Barton Bank (D Nicholson)	25-1	33-1	33-1	20-1
Coome Hill (W Dennis)	25-1	25-1	33-1	25-1
Cyborgo (M Pipe)	16-1	33-1	25-1	33-1
Danoli (T Foley/Ir)	33-1	33-1	33-1	33-1
Simply Dashing (T Easterby)	25-1	33-1	—	33-1

Each-way a quarter the odds, places, 1, 2, 3 (Cheltenham, Thursday, 19 March)

STRATFORD

HYPERION

12.50 Browjoshy (nb)
1.20 Homme De Fer
1.50 POUCHER (nap)
2.20 Rythm Rock
2.50 Ebullient Equiname
3.20 Northern Saddler
3.50 Goodtime George

GOING: Chase course - Soft (Good to Soft in places); Hurdles - Soft (Heavy in places).
● Left-hand course with 200yds run-in.
● Course is SW of Stratford-on-Avon on A439. Stratford station 1m. ADMISSION: Club £13, Tattersalls £9, Centre of the course £4. CAR PARK: £2 or free.
● LEADING TRAINERS: M Pipe 31 winners from 101 runners (30.7%), D Nicholson 15-52 (28.8%), K Bailey 15-79 (19%), P Hobbs 13-68 (19.1%).
● LEADING JOCKEYS: A P McCoy 25 winners from 118 races (21.2%), R Dunwoody 22-94 (23.4%), N Williamson 18-111 (16.2%), M A Fitzgerald 13-64 (20.3%).
● FAVOURITES: 168 wins from 468 races (35.9%).
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Goatsfut (1.20), Mill Bay Sam (1.20), Irish Sea (2.20).

12.50 HARTSHORNE MOTOR SERVICES LTD MAIDEN HURDLE (CLASS E) (DIV I) £3,000 added 2m 6f 110yds

1 5-3 BROWJOSHY (34) (B D L Racing) Mrs J Pitman 4 11 5 D Leahy
2 /322-4 CHEROKEE CHIEF (44) (A Boyd-Rochfort) O Sherwood 6 11 5 J A McCarthy
3 /240-5 DARK ORCHARD (36) (T J Parrott) I Williams 6 11 5 D Bridgwater
4 0-03F FOLDING (18) (Mrs Althea Barclay) Mrs A Barclay 6 11 5 T Jenks
5 41/ KING'S BANKER (581) (J E H Collins) N Henderson 6 11 5 M A Fitzgerald
6 1-3 KING ON THE RUN (34) (BF) (Lady Harris) D Nicholson 4 11 5 R Johnson
7 P2-2 NICE APPROACH (15) (Bob Froome) R Hodges 4 11 5 T Dascombe
8 60-204 RIVER DAWN (38) (Uplands Bloodstock) C Brooks 5 11 5 G Bradley
9 000/ SEIZE THE DAY (P948) (Mrs N M Coombe) M Coombe 6 11 5 Miss M Coombe
10 4/2-34 SURSUM CORDA (34) (BF) (M Ward-Thomas) T Forster 6 11 5 R Dunwoody
11 F-UR PENNYAHEI (8) (S A Brookshaw) S Brookshaw 6 11 0 Mr P Costello (7)
12 PPP-0P SHARP ALICE (11) (A Hollingsworth) A Hollingsworth 8 11 0 Guy Lewis (3)
13 0-0043 TAWNY WARBLER (15) (Mrs P Robeson) Mrs P Robeson 5 11 0 M Richards
– 13 declared –

BETTING: 11-4 King On The Run, 3-1 Browjoshy, 9-2 Cherokee Chief, 6-1 Sursum Corda, 7-1 King's Banker, 8-1 River Dawn, 12-1 Dark Orchard, 14-1 others
1996: meeting abandoned due to frost

FORM GUIDE

BROWJOSHY, a highly encouraging fifth of 21 to Country Beau on his debut in a Newbury bumper in March, showed that he would soon be winning races over hurdles when third to easy winner Easter Ross on his return at Windsor last month. He was outpaced at halfway but kept on well from the third last. That was over two miles and Jenny Pitman's gelding will be much better suited by today's trip. Sursum Corda was fourth when favourite for the Windsor race, 23 lengths behind Browjoshy. He looked a good prospect when runner-up to Splendid Thyne at Lingfield on his sole start last season (Dark Orchard fourth) but has twice failed to reproduce that form this term, although Tim Forster's horses are going better now. King On The Run beat Churchtown Glen, who has already won over hurdles in this country, in a maiden Irish point-to-point in March and started warm favourite for a Chepstow bumper on his first run for David Nicholson. He could finish only third of nine, beaten over 11 lengths, to Irish Banker but remains an interesting prospect and should be suited by this trip. Cherokee Chief had some decent placed form over hurdles last season but ran poorly on his return at Towcester when fourth to Christchurch. Nice Approach, another ex-Irish pointer, shaped well in second to Mister Sandrovitch in a Newton Abbot bumper on his debut over here, while Tawny Warbler has shown enough to suggest she can win soon and the fine form of Nicky Henderson's runners means that newcomer King's Banker is one to note. Selection: BROWJOSHY

1.20 HARTSHORNE MOTOR SERVICES LTD MAIDEN HURDLE (CLASS E) (DIV II) £3,000 added 2m 6f 110yds

1 /F-UPP CLOBEEVER BOY (35) (Mrs J K Spear) M Sheppard 7 11 5 Mr J M Pritchard
2 /URP0- GOATSFUT (304) (D Jones) B Preece 7 11 5 Gary Lyons B
3 666-23 HOMME DE FER (40) (BF) (Miss M Vencatagadoo) K Bailey 5 11 5 N Williamson
4 3120-3 KING MOLE (47) (BF) (Denis Milne) J Old 6 11 5 M A Fitzgerald
5 0/R00- MILL BAY SAM (258) (David John Robbins) R Dickin 6 11 5 X Aizpuru (5) B
6 050-41 MR MAGNETIC (191) (Mrs A L Wood) T Forster 6 11 5 S Wynne
7 /05-00 PEDLAR'S CROSS (34) (A F Merritt) D McCourt 5 11 5 R Studholme (7)
8 008 SAFE TO ASSUME (25) (R G Brazington) R Brazington 6 11 5 R Massey (3)
9 0442-U WILLOWS ROULETTE (29) (Miss Jayne Brace) A Hobbs 5 11 5 C Llewellyn
10 0/ HOCANTELL (636) (Mrs K B Elliott) P Murphy 6 11 0 R Thornton
11 0003-P LUCRATIVE PERK (24) (Eddie Wilkinson) Miss C Caroe 5 11 0 D Leahy
12 0-0 POLLYS SISTER (22) (Mrs P L Aldersey) C Barwell 5 11 0 R Johnson
– 12 declared –

BETTING: 6-4 King Mole, 7-4 Homme De Fer, 5-1 Mr Magnetic, 7-1 Willows Roulette, 25-1 Clobeever Boy, Goatsfut, Mill Bay Sam, Pedlar's Cross, Safe To Assume, Hocantell, Lucrative Perk, Pollys Sister

FORM GUIDE

Tim Forster has his runners in good form and there is every chance that MR MAGNETIC *will be ready first time.* The six-year-old landed a Gowran Park bumper back in June on his last run in Ireland. That was over two and a half miles, so stamina will not be a problem. King Mole is the obvious alternative. The six-year-old had fair form in bumpers last season, winning at Huntingdon, and was beaten just over three lengths in third to Two To Tango when favourite for his hurdling debut at Taunton (2m 1f). He can improve, particularly over this longer trip. Homme De Fer, a good second to Brownes Hill Lad at Hereford on his hurdling bow, was beaten 17 lengths in third to Eishken at Wincanton last time but should figure in the finish. Willows Roulette, a well-beaten third when unseating at the last in Easy Feelin's Worcester race, can be given a chance of a place on the pick of last season's form. Selection: MR MAGNETIC

1.50 J H ROWE CHALLENGE TROPHY (HANDICAP CHASE) (CLASS D) £5,500 added 3m

1 6045-3 PIMBERLEY PLACE (34) (A J Cresser) N Twiston-Davies 9 12 0 C Llewellyn B
2 10-U2P CHURCH LAW (31) (CD) (Mrs L C Taylor) Mrs L Taylor 10 11 9 N Williamson
3 131-26 POUCHER (12) (Mrs A L Wood) T Forster 7 11 7 S Wynne
4 242-12 COOLE HILL (35) (BF) (B Winfield & J Potter) D Nicholson 6 11 2 R Johnson
5 5/16-2 HIGHLAND JACK (86) (D) (K Gibbons & B Cardiff) A Turnell 7 10 6 R Dunwoody
– 5 declared –

BETTING: 6-4 Coole Hill, 3-1 Poucher, 9-2 Church Law, 11-2 Highland Jack, 6-1 Pimberley Place.

FORM GUIDE

COOLE HILL, a game winner from Naughty Future on her return at Market Rasen, would have gone close to following up at Huntingdon had she not blundered at the last, eventually going down by a length and a half to High Learie. She has been raised 3lb for that but is again not highly tried. Poucher was having his first race since beating Alice Smith 14 lengths at Hereford in February when ten lengths runner-up to Sophie May at Worcester last month. He failed to progress at Towcester recently, jumping left and finishing last of six to Hill Trix but should not be written off yet. Pimberley Place has not won for two years and was tailed off at Chepstow on his return, but the current form of the Twiston-Davies horses is encouraging. Church Law, seven lengths second to The Gopher at Warwick, was pulled up at the same course last time in Over The Deel's race. Highland Jack was no match for Strong Tarquin in a three-runner Worcester race on his return in October but can do better. Selection: COOLE HILL

2.20 A H P TRAILERS WOMBOURNE SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS G) £3,000 added 2m 110yds

1 604412 ERICOLIN (13) (D) (BF) (Ms Caron Stokell) Miss A Stokell 7 11 10 X Aizpuru (5) V
2 63-F45 RAGAMUFFIN ROMEO (F26) (CD) (Mrs D Sawyer) H Collingridge 6 11 10 A Thornton
3 -2U455 RYTHM ROCK (15) (Peter Radcliffe) D Gandolfo 6 11 10 R Dunwoody B
4 3004F- ANLACE (F17) (D) (The Felix Bowness Partnership) S Mellor 6 11 6 C Webb (5)
5 040/0U LILILO (13) (Richard Lee) R Lee 5 10 12 G Hogan (3)
6 4P30-1 NORTHERN NATION (33) (D) (Ed Weetman) W Clay 9 10 12 M A Fitzgerald
7 536034 INDIAN NECTAR (13) (Mrs Carol Newman) R Brotherton 4 10 10 R Johnson
8 P-FFPP TAKE A FLYER (50) (CD) (Ron Osborne) R Hodges 7 10 8 T Dascombe
9 6FPP-F OFFICE HOURS (14) (Oakford Horse Transport) R Baker 6 10 8 Miss L Pope
10 P06-05 MISS NIGHT OWL (47) (P A Tylor) R Frost 6 10 4 J Frost
11 6/00-0 ANNABEL'S BABY (12) (D) (R J Peake) D Wintle 6 10 3 N Williamson
12 0-66 SPEEDY SNAPS PRIDE (27) (Gerald West) J C Poulton 5 10 3 Leesa Long B
13 050 IRISH SEA (USA) (36) (Salvo Giannini) B Llewellyn 4 10 0 C Llewellyn B
14 U60-P5 VITA NUOVA (29) (The Stanton Seven) Mrs C Hicks 6 10 0 V Slattery
– 14 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Irish Sea 9st 13lb, Vita Nuova 9st 10lb.
BETTING: 11-4 Rythm Rock, 4-1 Ragamuffin Romeo, 9-2 Northern Nation, 11-2 Ericolin, 7-1 Anlace, 8-1 Indian Nectar, 12-1 Miss Night Owl, 16-1 others

FORM GUIDE

NORTHERN NATION returned from a 14-month absence to beat Galloping Guns a neck in a Uttoxeter selling handicap last month and can follow up. He has been raised 7lb for that win, but Galloping Guns went on to win off a 5lb higher mark at Ludlow and Northern Nation is still well handicapped off a mark of 68. The fact that he has been given a month to recover from the run is encouraging. Ericolin is in good form but the handicapper has his measure now, as he is 8lb higher than when three-quarters of a length second to Dontdresstordinner at Bangor last time, when he carried a 7lb penalty for his earlier Fakenham win. It is worth noting that Miss Night Owl finished about seven lengths in front of Ericolin at Taunton last month in Little Hooligan's race and is 14lb better off. Rythm Rock will appreciate the drop in class after finishing fifth to Balladur at Sandown and Sunley Secure at Newton Abbot this month. Richard Dunwoody takes the ride. Indian Nectar was beaten under five lengths in fourth to Zahalie at Bangor last time and rates best of the others. Selection: NORTHERN NATION

2.50 TOTE NOVICE CHASE (QUALIFIER) (CLASS D) £6,000 added 2m 5f 110yds

1 1P-212 SPRING GALE (18) (BF) (M Crabb, B Ead, P May, M Moore) O Sherwood 6 11 4 J A McCarthy
2 4 BERKELEY BLADE (17) (R Mathew and D Mathew) R Mathew 7 10 12 R Bellamy
3 P22P/4 CAPENWRAY (32) (B K Peppiatt) J King 6 10 12 C Llewellyn
4 421-2F DENHAM HILL (15) (BF) (J E Brown) C Mann 6 10 12 R Dunwoody
5 12/40/ EBULLIENT EQUINAME (857) (Lynn Wilson) N Henderson 6 10 12 M A Fitzgerald
6 215-5P FLYING GUNNER (35) (Mrs R J Skan) D Nicholson 6 10 12 R Johnson
7 3-0215 JET BOYS (17) (The Jet Stationery Company) Mrs J Pitman 7 10 12 D Leahy
8 F KINGS ANGEL (93) (Chance Partnership) A Foster 6 10 12 D Creech (7)
9 3323-P MITCHELLS BEST (24) (A Hollingsworth) A Hollingsworth 11 10 12 Guy Lewis (3)
10 /234-P TRIPLE WITCHING (32) (Mrs E S Robins) N Henderson 11 10 12 N Williamson
– 10 declared –

BETTING: 3-1 Denham Hill, 7-2 Ebullient Equiname, 9-2 Spring Gale, 11-2 Flying Gunner, 6-1 Triple Witching, 13-2 Jet Boys, 16-1 Capenwray, 25-1 others

FORM GUIDE

EBULLIENT EQUINAME missed all last season but that need not be a problem for this chasing debut. He won first time out both in 1994-95 and last season and proved a useful, if not top-class, novice hurdler with victories at Hereford and Nottingham. The Henderson horses are really firing at present and this one should know his job. Henderson also runs Triple Witching, but the 11-year-old has seen his best days. Flying Gunner had hurdling form of a similar level to Ebullient Equiname but has not shone in two starts over fences, last time being pulled up in Ottowa's valuable Worcester race. Jet Boys makes his chasing debut having shown improved form to make all in a three-mile Newbury novice hurdle and then again force the pace in the good Cheltenham race won by Lord Jim. He will be a danger. So will Spring Gale, who won a Uttoxeter handicap chase off a mark of 110 last month but was then beaten at 3-1 on by Cash Flow at Doncaster. Denham Hill, no match for Escartefigue on his chasing bow at Worcester, took a heavy fall six out when still being in contention at Warwick last time and may need more time to recover. Selection: EBULLIENT EQUINAME

3.20 ALISON GALE HANDICAP CHASE (AMATEUR RIDERS) (CLASS E) £4,500 added 2m 1f 110yds

1 6P-445 BORO VACATION (26) (D) (Mrs C I A Paterson) P Nicholls 8 12 0 Mr J Young (7)
2 3-3240 NORTHERN SADDLER (15) (D) (Richard J Evans) R Hodges 10 11 10 Mr J Crowley (7)
3 5P61-5 SHREWD JOHN (14) (D) (Mrs D Thomas) Mrs D Thomas 11 11 4 Mr G Elliott (5)
4 -12423 LOBSTER COTTAGE (19) (Major-Gen R L T Burges) K Bailey 8 11 3 Mr R Wakley (5)
5 3114/P GOOD FOR A LOAN (12) (T M J Curry) R Lee 10 10 12 Mr O McPhail (7)
6 306036 NORTHERN OPTIMIST (25) (CD) (Mackworth Snooker Club) B Llewellyn 9 10 0 Miss E J Jones (7)
– 6 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Northern Optimist 9st 2lb
BETTING: 7-4 Lobster Cottage, 3-1 Northern Saddler, 7-2 Boro Vacation, 4-1 Shrewd John, 12-1 Northern Optimist, 16-1 Good For A Loan.

FORM GUIDE

NORTHERN SADDLER showed up well in his first three races this season, including when fourth to Nashville Star this month, beaten under nine lengths. He flopped in Well Timed's Newton Abbot race on heavy ground (which he has handled in the past) last time, but he has dropped a handy 7lb as a result and is 11lb lower than at Windsor. Boro Vacation finished behind Northern Saddler at Windsor and at Fontwell in Parliamentarian's race and is poorly treated with the selection. Lobster Cottage has not jumped well of late and may have his own ideas about the game. His Windsor second to Friendly Knight was a good effort but he was beaten a long way in third to Wayfarers Way at Fakenham last time. Lightly-raced Good For A Loan has run well fresh in the past, so it was disappointing to see him pulled up at Catterick 12 days ago on his return. Shrewd John, a Fontwell winner on his final start last season, can do better with his recent Hereford run behind him. Selection: NORTHERN SADDLER

3.50 RICHARDSON DEVELOPMENTS NATIONAL HUNT NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,500 added 2m 110yds

1 00-P6 CHARLIE BANKER (25) (D R A C Partnership) K Burke 5 11 0 M A Fitzgerald
2 0- CLARE'S SPRING (297) (Fieldspring Racing) R Hodges 4 11 0 T Dascombe
3 51-120 DIAMOND HALL (26) (D) (R D Tudor) K Burke 4 11 0 N Williamson
4 1-16 GATFLAX (52) (D) (Giles Clarke) N Twiston-Davies 5 11 0 C Llewellyn
5 00-0P GINGER WATT (10) (Hugh B McGahon) R J Price 5 11 0 J A McCarthy B
6 32 GOODTIME GEORGE (18) (Mrs M J Bone) Mrs J Pitman 4 11 0 D Leahy
7 0642 HAILSTORM (61) (Peter E Clinton) D Nicholson 4 11 0 R Johnson
8 0 LANG WHANG (51) (Mrs N Bowlby) A J Bowlby 6 11 0 G Hogan (3)
9 1203- NEVER IN DEBT (223) (D) (M R Clough) A Hobbs 5 11 0 R Dunwoody
10 56 SNOWBOY (36) (George Brookes) R Lee 5 11 0 R Thornton
11 6 YOUNG SPARTACUS (21) (B G Hellyer) T Forster 4 11 0 S Wynne
12 2/100- IT'SNOTSIMPLE (262) (Mrs G A Robarts) R Frost 5 10 9 J Frost
13 420-05 WHERE'S MIRANDA (20) (Mrs B Taylor) G McCourt 5 10 9 D Bridgwater
– 13 declared –

BETTING: 11-8 Goodtime George, 11-4 Gatflax, 7-2 Hailstorm, 11-1 Young Spartacus, 12-1 Diamond Hall, 14-1 Never In Debt, It'snotsimple, 16-1 others

FORM GUIDE

GOODTIME GEORGE, third to Winston Run on his debut in a Sandown bumper, did really well on his hurdling bow at Cheltenham to run Dawn Leader to four lengths and can improve again to win this. Never In Debt could prove the danger. Andy Hobbs' five-year-old has run his best races when fresh, winning at Worcester on his debut last season and running a good third to useful sorts in Andsuephi and Stormhill Stag at the same course in May having been off since December. Richard Dunwoody rides. Dual bumper winners Diamond Hall and Gatflax disappointed on their hurdling debuts at Windsor and Uttoxeter respectively. Gatflax can improve with his stable in good form now. Hailstorm, runner-up in a Gowran Park bumper on 30 October, makes his debut for David Nicholson today, while Young Spartacus gave encouragement in sixth of 21 to Road Racer at Huntingdon on his first run. Selection: GOODTIME GEORGE

CARLISLE

HYPERION

12.50 Tom's River 1.00 Prince Of Saints 1.30 Valedictory 2.00 Valiant Warrior 2.30 Pentland Squire 3.00 Hobkirk 3.30 Manshaar

GOING: Soft.
● Right-hand undulating course.
● Racecourse is on the southern outskirts of town on Durdar road, 4 miles west of junction 42 of M6. Bus service from Carlisle rail station which is 2 miles away. ADMISSION: Club £13; Tattersalls £9; Course £5. CAR PARK: Centre of course £4; remainder £1.
● LEADING TRAINERS: Mrs M Reveley 32-98 (32.7%), G Richards 30-129 (23.3%), J M Jefferson 13-54 (24.1%), L Lungo 13-84 (15.5%).
● LEADING JOCKEYS: A Dobbin 22-126 (17.5%), B Storey 18-159 (11.3%), R Guest 10-68 (14.7%), J Callaghan 8-46 (17.4%).
● FAVOURITES: 147-355 (41.4%).
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: None.

12.30 GOSSIP HOLME NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) (DIV I) £2,500 added 2m 4f 110yds

1 634-31 IRISH WILDCARD (33) (C) J H Johnson 9 11 5 E Callaghan
2 05 AREN'T WE LUCKY (28) J J O'Neill 4 10 12 R McGrath (3)
3 GOLDEN MEADOW J Dixon 5 10 12 D Parker
4 P KING PIP (50) D Lamb 5 10 12 J Burke
5 3-3653 LUZCADOU (FR) (20) M Hammond 4 10 12 R Garritty
6 5 MASTER WOOD (21) C Grant 6 10 12 R Supple
7 P4F/ MIDDLE BAY (781) D Moffatt 6 10 12 D J Moffatt
8 0000/F MR FRANGIPANI (24) G Richards 6 10 12 A Dobbin
9 00- QUEENS BRIGADE (375) F Walton 5 10 12 K Johnson
10 00000/ SILVER PRIDE (663) M Meagher 7 10 12 L Wyer
11 F5-0 THORNWOOD (15) J Oliver 5 10 12 B Storey
12 120-2 TOM'S RIVER (15) Mrs M Reveley 5 10 12 P Niven
13 P4-000 CELTIC COMMA (22) W Reed 6 10 7 T Reed B
14 00-0 SANTA BARBARA (20) C Grant 6 10 7 G Lee
– 14 declared –

BETTING: 3-1 Tom's River, 7-2 Aren't We Lucky, 4-1 Irish Wildcard, 11-2 Luzcadou, 11-2 Master Wood, 16-1 Mr Frangipani, 16-1 Middle Bay, 20-1 others

1.00 HOARY TOM NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £4,500 added 2m

1 2P4-2P FLAT TOP (38) M W Easterby 6 12 0 A Dobbin
2 1240-0 INGLETONIAN (24) (D) B Mactaggart 8 12 0 B Storey
3 05-F11 PRINCE OF SAINTS (12) (D) M Hammond 6 11 7 R Garritty
4 502-3B ADVANCE EAST (20) (D) M Dods 5 11 6 T Reed
5 13420/ PEPITIST (P907) M Hammond 6 10 13 D Bentley
6 F3022- KILLBALLY BOY (244) (D) G Richards 7 10 13 B Harding
7 P0PPP3 AHBEJAYBUS (4) Miss L Siddall 8 10 0 M Foster B
– 7 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Ahbejaybus 9st 2lb.
BETTING: 9-4 Prince Of Saints, 3-1 Killbally Boy, 5-1 Flat Top, Advance East, 6-1 Ingletonian, 6-1 Pepitist, 66-1 Ahbejaybus

1.30 GOSSIP HOLME NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) (DIV II) £2,500 added 2m 4f 110yds

1 45-02 COUNT KARMUSKI (21) F Murphy 5 10 12 E Callaghan
2 4- FUTURE'S TRADER (341) M Hammond 4 10 12 R Garritty
3 /00P2- JUST ONE QUESTION (284) J J O'Neill 7 10 12 R McGrath (3)
4 P52 MONOTONY (28) C Grant 4 10 12 Mrs S Grant
5 46344P MOONLIGHT VENTURE (24) M Ware 5 10 12 S Taylor (5)
6 6P0 NOUKARI (14) J Howard Johnson 4 10 12 B Harding
7 OVER THE BURN B Mactaggart 5 10 12 B Storey
8 402/3- SHORTSTAFF (257) Miss L Perratt 8 10 12 A Dobbin
9 53-20 TOTEM FOLE (66) Mrs M Reveley 4 10 12 P Niven
10 VALEDICTORY (F222) P Monteith 4 10 12 L Wyer
11 0U WHAT THE HECK (28) P Cheesbrough 5 10 12 A S Smith
12 4F/ GYPSY RACE (675) M W Easterby 7 10 7 P Midgley (3)
13 0-3432 JOWOODY (33) Mrs D Thomson 4 10 7 D Parker
14 P- SEE MORE CASTLES (288) G A Harker 6 10 7 O Pears
– 14 declared –

BETTING: 11-4 Valedictory, 4-1 Count Karmuski, Just One Question, 7-1 Jowoody, 8-1 Future's Trader, Totem Fole, 16-1 Shortstaff, 14-1 others

2.00 PIONEER FOODS 'LIKELY LADS' HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £6,500 added 3m 2f

1 30-433 VALIANT WARRIOR (10) M Hammond 8 12 0 R Garritty
2 224-21 CEILIDH BOY (29) (C) Mrs J Goodfellow 11 11 6 B Storey
3 F-1124 LORD OF THE WEST (17) (C) J J O'Neill 8 11 6 R McGrath (3)
4 F0PP4- NAZZARO (294) (D) W G M Turner 8 11 5 J Power (7) B
5 2FPP-5 NORTHERN SQUIRE (33) (CD) J M Jefferson 9 10 10 E Callaghan
6 1P515/ ABERCROMBY CHIEF (619) (D) J H Johnson 12 10 6 A S Smith
7 33-112 COMMITTED SCHEDULE (20) (D) (BF) G Richards 8 10 0 B Harding
8 2046-6 HEAVENLY CITIZEN (12) (D) J Gledson 9 10 0 K Johnson
9 32-24U FERN LEADER (4) C Grant 7 10 0 C McCormack (5)
– 9 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Committed Schedule 9st 12lb, Heavenly Citizen 9st 11lb, Fern Leader 9st 1lb.
BETTING: 100-30 Valiant Warrior, 7-2 Lord Of The West, 4-1 Ceilidh Boy, 9-2 Committed Schedule, 7-1 Fern Leader, 8-1 Northern Squire, 16-1 Abercromby Chief, 25-1 others

2.30 MARY BROW HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS D) £3,750 added 2m 1f

1 105-32 ROSSEL (4) (D) (BF) P Monteith 4 11 10 J Jardine (7)
2 62-211 ONCE MORE FOR LUCK (13) (CD) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 5 P Niven
3 33141- IFALLELSEFAILS (249) (CD) L Lungo 6 11 2 W Dowling (7)
4 122221 PENTLAND SQUIRE (21) (CD) J Jefferson 6 11 0 A K Smith (7)
5 43-5 SWANDALE FLYER (42) N Bycroft 5 10 0 B Grattan (5)
– 6 declared –

BETTING: 9-4 Once More For Luck, 5-2 Pentland Squire, 11-4 Rossel, 5-1 Ifallelsefails, 14-1 Swandale Flyer.

3.00 BRICK KILN NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 2m 4f 110yds

1 05-311 BURNT IMP (13) (D) G M Moore 7 11 12 J Callaghan
2 00/FU5 ABSOLUTE FOLLY (12) Mrs S Smith 5 10 12 R Guest
3 6-UP APACHE RAIDER (4) F Murphy 5 10 12 E Callaghan
4 562/3 BALLYVAUGHAN (10) E Elliott 7 10 12 D Parker
5 00PP-P CRASHBALLOO (20) P Cheesbrough 6 10 12 A S Smith
6 643-FP DANTES AMOUR (139) E Alston 8 10 12 A Bates (5)
7 5/45P6 HICKSONS CHOICE (15) J Wade 9 10 12 K Johnson
8 UPU6-4 HIGH HANDED (13) T Caldwell 6 10 12 Michael Brennan (3)
9 4/2-F3 HOBKIRK (80) A Whillans 6 10 12 K Johnson
10 4/124- INTO THE WEST (274) (D) J H Johnson 8 10 12 B Harding
11 1215P- PAPERISING (250) (CD) G Richards 5 10 12 A Dobbin
12 F22-5U UP FOR RANSOME (26) Mrs A Naughton 8 10 12 Mr T J Barry (7)
13 3140- CELESTIAL CHOIR (F52) (D) (BF) J L Eyre 7 10 7 B Storey
– 13 declared –

BETTING: 5-2 Burnt Imp, 5-2 Celestial Choir, 11-2 Paperising, 7-1 Into The West, 6-1 Hobkirk, 16-1 High Handed, 16-1 Ballyvaughan, 20-1 others

3.30 BELLS FIELD HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 2m 4f 110yds

1 P20/60 RUSTY REEL (46) W G M Turner 7 12 0 J Power (7)
2 11P/5 NODDLE (USA) (12) (D) L Lungo 9 11 5 R Supple
3 3500-U RADANPOUR (20) (D) J H Johnson 5 11 4 A S Smith
4 35-635 MENSHAAR (USA) (4) L Lungo 5 10 6 W Dowling (7)
5 /13620 LORD RULLAH (33) J Wade 6 10 3 A Dobbin
6 0/P60- MOONSHINE DANCER (300) (C) Mrs S Smith 7 10 2 R Wilkinson (5)
– 6 declared –

BETTING: 13-8 Menshaar, 3-1 Radanpour, 7-2 Lord Rullah, 11-2 Noddle, 13-2 Moonshine Dancer, 7-1 Rusty Reel

PLUMPTON

HYPERION

1.10 Strong Tel 1.40 Wonderfull Polly 2.10 Ragamuff 2.40 Kurakka 3.10 Dawn Chance 3.40 August Twelfth

GOING: Soft (heavy in home straight).
● Left-hand, undulating course with sharp bends. Tricky downhill fence in back straight. Uphill run-in of 200yds.
● Course is off A275 S of Haywards Heath. Plumpton station adjoins course. ADMISSION: Members £13; Tattersalls £9; Course £5. CAR PARK: £4 (centre of course) & £1.
● LEADING TRAINERS: M Pipe — 25 winners from 49 runners gives a success ratio of 51%; J Jenkins 13 from 77 (16.9%); R Rowe 13 from 87 (14.9%); R Hodges 12 from 61 (19.7%).
● LEADING JOCKEYS: A P McCoy 30 wins from 83 rides gives a success ratio of 36.1%; J R Kavanagh 12 from 66 (18.2%); B Powell 8 from 67 (13.4%); G Bradley 7 from 25 (28%).
● FAVOURITES: 194 wins in 447 races (43.4%).
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: None

1.10 ARDINGLY 'NATIONAL HUNT' NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 2m 4f

1 150-1P IRANOS (FR) (25) (CD) (BF) M Pipe 5 11 5 C Maude
2 026-14 SILENT CRACKER (18) M Pitman 5 11 5 D Gallagher
3 /33R-1 STRONG TEL (34) (D) M Pipe 7 11 5 A P McCoy
4 0323-6 BOLD LEAP (28) P R Webber 5 10 12 A Thornton
5 JEWELLER'S WELLS D O'Brien 5 10 12 Mr B Durack (5)
6 1-3U3 JUST NIP (17) Mrs L Richards 4 10 12 P Holley
7 03 ROYAL VALOR (10) J Ffitch-Heyes 5 10 12 J Goldstein (7)
8 005-36 ZAISAN (33) J Gifford 4 10 12 P Hide
9 CHERRY LEE J C Poulton 5 10 7 J Culloty
10 0P MANDALADY (34) M Madgwick 4 10 7 B Fenton
11 000 SANDANTE (8) R Buckler 6 10 7 B Powell
– 11 declared –

BETTING: 5-4 Strong Tel, 3-1 Silent Cracker, 6-1 Just Nip, 7-1 Iranos, 14-1 Bold Leap, 16-1 Zaisan, 25-1 Royal Valor, 33-1 others

1.40 YEARS END NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £4,100 added 2m

1 -0246P WIXOE WONDER (27) M Bradstock 7 11 11 A P McCoy B
2 55-343 WONDERFULL POLLY (10) (D) P Nicholls 9 11 3 A Thornton
3 U2-443 PRIMITIVE STREAK (43) R Hodges 6 10 13 P Holley
4 6-U404 THUHOOL (14) R Rowe 9 10 13 A Garrity (7)
5 2/FP-0 KARICLEIGH MAN (24) P Hobbs 7 10 7 G Tormey
6 4530P3 JOKER JACK (17) R Dean 12 10 3 J Goldstein (7)
7 00-U PHILISITATE (10) J Ffitch-Heyes 6 10 1 B Fenton
8 0P00-P JUST A BEAU (19) Mrs L Jewell 6 10 1 J R Kavanagh
9 PP-P30 KONGIES MELODY (34) C Popham 6 10 1 S Burrough B
– 9 declared –

BETTING: 5-4 Wonderfull Polly, 7-2 Wixoe Wonder, 6-1 Thuhool, 7-1 Primitive Streak, Karicleigh Man, 14-1 Kongies Melody, 20-1 Joker Jack, 25-1 others

2.10 CLAYTON HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS F) £3,500 added 3m 1f 110yds

1 25-234 SCOTBY (BEL) (12) (C) R Buckler 7 11 10 B Powell
2 60/F14 OLIVER'S SECRET (11) (BF) M Pipe 7 11 9 A P McCoy
3 P4315- APATURA HATI (291) (CD) R Alner 6 11 5 A Thornton
4 6F153 JOJO (21) (C) D Grissell 7 11 4 J R Kavanagh
5 /2F3-U GREY GORDEN (14) T D McCarthy 9 11 4 J Culloty
6 153P2- FURRY FOX (239) R Curtis 9 11 4 Mr B Durack (5)
7 25-P1F LAUGHING FONTAINE (34) (BF) K Bailey 7 11 2 P Henley (3)
8 44-U53 PAVLOVA (14) (C) R Rowe 7 10 10 L Aspell (3)
9 /30242 RAGAMUFF (10) (BF) P Hobbs 8 10 6 D Maude
– 8 declared –

BETTING: 7-2 Laughing Fontaine, 5-1 Oliver's Secret, 11-2 Scotby, 6-1 Ragamuff, 7-1 Jojo, 8-1 Apatura Hati, Pavlova, 10-1 others

2.40 FRAMFIELD MAIDEN HURDLE (CLASS F) £2,600 added 2m 1f

1 0 CLASSIC EAGLE (12) Mrs D Haine 4 11 5 J F Titley
2 40 COMPASS POINTER (17) J Eustace 4 11 5 S McNeill
3 5P4- ILLUMINATE (F216) D O'Brien 4 11 5 W Marston
4 FP-P4 JOCTOR DON (21) J G Moore 5 11 5 J Magee (3)
5 2 KURAKKA (38) J Gifford 4 11 5 P Hide
6 2 MAD ALEX (21) M Haynes 4 11 5 C Maude
7 0-0 SMART GUY (14) Mrs L Jewell 5 11 5 D Gallagher
8 TISSUE OF LIES (USA) (F28) J Akehurst 4 11 5 A P McCoy
9 5 BUILT IN HEAVEN (29) J C Poulton 5 11 0 J Culloty
10 U BURNING FLAME (21) R Flower 4 11 0 J K McCarthy (7)
11 16405P MY BLACKBIRD (45) (D) M Bradstock 5 11 0 A Thornton
– 11 declared –

BETTING: 6-13 Kurakka, 6-1 Tissue Of Lies, 8-1 Classic Eagle, 16-1 Compass Pointer, 14-1 Illuminate, 16-1 Mad Alex, My Blackbird, 25-1 others

3.10 OFFHAM HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS F) £3,500 added 2m

1 233P-0 SIMPLY (15) (C) (D) M Madgwick 6 12 0 B Fenton
2 443-P2 COURT MASTER (14) (D) R Buckler 9 11 11 B Powell
3 U222-6 WINSPIT (15) (CD) R Alner 7 11 7 A Thornton
4 /6114- REGAL AURA (259) (C) (D) (BF) D O'Brien 7 11 3 W Marston
5 110F2/ HEAD FOR HEAVEN (655) (C) R Hoad 7 11 0 J F Titley
6 -02501 DAYS OF THUNDER (4) (CD) Mrs S Odell 9 10 11 (7ex) B Clifford
7 361P/P CLEVER DICK (19) (C) (D) Mrs L Jewell 12 10 6 D Gallagher
8 P3P34F DAWN CHANCE (19) (CD) H Haynes 11 10 0 Mr S Durack (5) B
– 8 declared –

Minimum weight 10st. True handicap weight: Dawn Chance 9st 1lb
BETTING: 11-4 Court Master, 4-1 Days Of Thunder, 5-1 Regal Aura, Dawn Chance, 11-2 Winspit, 16-1 Simply, Head For Heaven, 20-1 Clever Dick

3.40 LEWES HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 2m 1f

1 21431 TOTALLY YOURS (21) (CD) M Pipe 4 12 0 A P McCoy V
2 P4-584 NO PATTERN (34) (CD) G L Moore 5 11 7 D Gallagher
3 520-13 ALPINE JOKER (15) P Hobbs 4 11 0 Mr R Widger (7)
4 32-203 TONKA (20) D Gandolfo 5 10 12 L Harvey
5 245-10 AUGUST TWELFTH (14) (C) (D) D O'Brien 9 10 9 Mr S Durack (5)
6 0F-06P UNITED FRONT (24) (D) J Neville 5 10 0 J Culloty
7 -665P4 DO BE WARE (21) (CD) J Ffitch-Heyes 7 10 0 J Goldstein (7)
– 7 declared –

Minimum weight 10st. True handicap weight: [illegible]
BETTING: 5-2 Totally Yours, 7-2 Alpine Joker, 4-1 No Pattern, August Twelfth, 6-1 Tonka, 20-1 Do Be Ware, 25-1 United Front

RACING RESULTS

MUSSELBURGH

1.00: 1. **SILENT VALLEY** (A Thornton) 5-1; 2. **Feel A Line** 14-1; 3. **Mr Bombastique** 8-2. 9 ran. 5-6 fav Audrey's Pearl (pulled up). 4, 1. (Miss L Siddall, Tadcaster). Tote: £4.50; £1.40, £2.10, £1.60. Dual Forecast: £25.20. Computer Straight Forecast: £49.73. Tote Trio: £45.40.

1.30: 1. **SELDOM BUT SEVERE** (J Callaghan) 7-4; 2. **Parsons Green Boy** 25-1. 4 ran (2 finished). 11-10 fav Cottstown Boy (unseated rider) won by a distance. (E Elliott, Rushyford). Tote: £2.70. DF: £5.90. CSF: £18.18.

2.00: 1. **OVER THE BECK** (E Callaghan) 4-1; 2. **Northern Motto** 11-4 fav; 3. *Hurst Flyer* 12-1. 12 ran. ½, 1. (J M Jefferson, Malton). Tote: £6.50, £1.70, £1.60, £1.80. DF: £16.40. CSF: £13.70. Trio: £43.40.

2.30: 1. **STAN'S YOUR MAN** (Mr S Durack) 7-4 jt fav; 2. **Young Steven** 10-1; 3. **Invest Wisely** 7-1. 7 ran. 7-4 jt fav Mr Christie. 3½, 6. (Mrs J Goodfellow, Earlston). Tote: £2.80, £1.70, £2.50. Dual Forecast: £10.50. CSF: £16.92.

3.00: 1. **TOUGH TEST** (Mr S Durack) 7-2; 2. **Blue Charm** 13-8 fav; 3. **D'Arblay Street** 8-1. 7 ran. ¾, 6. (Mrs J Goodfellow, Earlston). Tote: £5.50, £2.90, £2.30. DF: £4.50. CSF: £8.40.

3.30: 1. **CAMDEN MOON** (L Wyer) 10-1; 2. **Joe Buzz** 9-4; 3. **Wellswood** 8-1. 10 ran. 15-8 fav Valhalla (6th). 4, 3. (J Hanson, Wetherby). Tote: £17.80; £4.20, £1.10, £2.20. DF: £20.20. CSF: £33.28. Trio: £40.90.

Placepot: £132.80. **Quadpot:** £14.60.
Place 6: £67.11. **Place 5:** £38.19.

TAUNTON

12.50: 1. **MANILENO** (G Supple) 13-8 fav; 2. **Alka International** 3-1; 3. **Almapa** 16-1. 10 ran. 5, 15. (M Pipe, Wellington). Tote: £2.80; £1.10, £1.40, £4.40. Dual Forecast: £3.80. Computer Straight Forecast: £6.18. Tricast: £48.69. Trio: £23.40.

1.20: 1. **SAXON DUKE** (G Tormey) 4-1; 2. **Millcroft Regatta** 14-1; 3. **Camera Man** 11-8 fav. 13 ran. 3, 1½. (P Hobbs, Minehead). Tote: £4.70; £2.00, £2.30, £1.80. DF: £29.50. CSF: £50.11. Tricast: £106.39. Trio: £22.10.

1.50: 1. **CLONGOUR** (G Tormey) 9-2 fav; 2. **Tellaporky** 11-2; 3. **Quiet Moments** 9-1. 15 ran. 4, 2. (P Hobbs, Minehead). Tote: £6.70; £1.90, £2.70, £3.00. Dual Forecast: £18.50. CSF: £29.51. Tricast: £207.68. Trio: £165.00. Non Runner: Montagnard.

2.20: 1. **LUKE WARM** (G Bradley) 2-1 fav; 2. **Finnigan Free** 14-1; 3. **All Clear** 9-1. 14 ran. 3½, 4. (D Gandolfo, Wantage). Tote: £3.10; £1.10, £5.50, £3.00. DF: £63.10. CSF: £31.84. *Tricast: £216.08. Trio: £154.30.*

2.50: 1. **EFFECTUAL** (S Kelly) 2-1; 2. **Bozo** 14-1; 3. **Ken Risk** 16-1. 13 ran. 8-13 fav Pelay (5th). 7, 11. (Miss V Williams, Hereford). Tote: £3.00; £1.40, £2.40, £3.20. DF: £31.90. CSF: £25.40. Trio: £81.00. NR: Milestone.

3.20: 1. **PRIDE OF KASHMIR** (G Tormey) 14-1; 2. **Reach The Clouds** 7-1; 3. **Over The Water** 25-1. 14 ran. 2-1 fav Catempo. nk, 11. (P Hobbs, Minehead). Tote: £15.30; £2.80, £2.00, £7.00. DF: £32.20. CSF: £109.14. Tricast: £2,279.60. *Trio: £305.80.*

Jackpot: £82,312.70.
Placepot: £195.30. **Quadpot:** £112.50.
Place 6: £166.27117.74. **Place 5:** £117.74.

● Seamus Durack took his season's tally to 19 by riding a double at Musselburgh yesterday for Dawn Goodfellow, with Stan's Your Man and Tough Test. Mrs Goodfellow said later: "Stan's Your Man is certainly the best horse I've bred and could be the best I've had."

هكذا من الاصل

CRICKET

Reiffel dominates as Donald takes record

Australia 309 & 257
South Africa 186 & 79-1

The new Northamptonshire paceman, Paul Reiffel, scored his highest Test score and claimed his 100th Test wicket as Australia pushed for victory over South Africa on the fourth day of the first Test in Melbourne yesterday.

Another English county player, Allan Donald, also had cause to celebrate, having become South Africa's record Test wicket-taker while taking figures of 6 for 59.

Reiffel cracked an unbeaten 79 off 115 balls with six fours as Australia's tail wagged to put Mark Taylor's team in a strong position with a second innings total of 257.

At the close South Africa were on 79 for 1, still 301 runs behind Australia, with Adam Bacher on 34 and Jacques Kallis 40. The pair had put on 77 runs in 98 minutes for the second wicket, giving the tourists real hope of salvaging the match and going to the second Test in Sydney later this week still level.

Reiffel had earlier continued a remarkable run of form with the bat since his recall to the Australian team during last summer's Ashes series in England.

In eight Tests since his return last June, the 31-year-old has scored 463 runs at an average of 66.14, with four half-centuries. Reiffel then rounded off his day by removing opener Gary Kirsten for a duck to claim his 100th wicket in his 33rd Test.

The Aussies had slumped to 44 for 4, but Reiffel helped them reach 257 in their second innings as their last five wickets added 151 runs. Reiffel and Michael Kasprowicz added 62 runs for the ninth wicket, with the former Essex bowler Kasprowicz making 19.

Glenn McGrath, the No 11, then heaped further indignity on the South African bowlers by cracking 18 as part of a 49-run partnership for the last wicket with Reiffel.

That hardly mattered to Donald, who had broken the late Hugh Tayfield's 40-year-old record of 170 Test wickets for South Africa. He has now taken 171 wickets in 36 Tests.

Donald, 31, was kept out of Test cricket until April 1992 when South Africa was allowed back into international sport after the apartheid era boycott. During those wilderness years he was persuaded by South African cricket chief, Dr Ali Bacher, not to defect to England.

Earlier in the day, Australian captain Mark Taylor scored 59 as he and Ricky Ponting (32) got their side off on a steady start.

It was Taylor's 36th Test half-century and a courageous innings under trying circumstances. He defied the South Africans for 248 minutes, faced 195 balls and hit four fours before he unluckily fell to the off-spinner Pat Symcox.

Australia won toss
AUSTRALIA – First Innings 309 (R T Ponting 105, S R Waugh 56; P L Symcox 4-69).
SOUTH AFRICA – First Innings 186 (G Kirsten 83).
AUSTRALIA – Second Innings
(Overnight: 67 for 4)

*M A Taylor c Cullinan b Symcox	59
R T Ponting c and b Pollock	32
I A Healy b Donald	4
P R Reiffel not out	79
S K Warne c Symcox b Donald	10
M S Kasprowicz c Kirsten b Donald	19
G D McGrath c McMillan b Pollock	18
Extras (b4, lb3, nb4)	11
Total (96.2 overs)	257

Fall of wickets: 5-106, 6-128, 7-128, 8-146, 9-208
Bowling: Donald 27-8-59-6 (3nb), Pollock 21-2-58-3 (1nb), Symcox 35-9-90-1, McMillan 2-0-9-0, Klusener 9-2-28-0, Cronje 2-0-11-0
SOUTH AFRICA – Second Innings

G Kirsten b Reiffel	0
A M Bacher not out	34
J H Kallis not out	40
Extras (b3, nb2)	5
Total (for 1, 30 overs)	79

Fall of wickets: 1-2
Bowling: McGrath 9-4-18-0, Reiffel 6-3-9-1 (nb), Kasprowicz 4-0-19-0, Warne 9-1-27-0 (nb), M Waugh 2-0-3-0.
Umpires: S Bucknor (WI) and S Randell (Aus).

Franks raises England's hopes

South Africa Under-19 506-9 dec
England Under-19 291 & 36-0

Paul Franks showed his top-order team-mates how to occupy the crease as he made a magnificent century in England Under-19s' brave rearguard on the second day of the second Test against South Africa Under-19 in Fochville yesterday.

Franks, batting at No 9, finished unbeaten on 119 in England's total of 291 which meant they still had to follow on but gives them a great chance of a draw. At close, England were 38 for 0 with one day left.

England started the day in deep trouble on 77 for 5 and lost Jonathan Powell in the fifth over when he was bowled by the opening bowler Victor Mpitsang.

Graham Napier looked untroubled as he made 32 but drove leg-spinner Jacques Rudolph to Matthew Street at short extra cover to leave England 117 for 7.

Franks and wicketkeeper Nick Wilton, who came in when Chris Schofield was bowled, stuck to their task well, first seeing off the new ball then coping admirably with Rudolph and the left-arm wrist-spinner Gulam Bodi.

Franks played sensibly and curbed his natural attacking instincts in the overs either side of lunch as he and Wilton, who reached double figures for the first time on the tour, added 75 for the 10th wicket before Wilton was caught at third slip.

Franks brought up his half-century, which came off 132 balls, with a square drive off Mpitsang, then took advantage of a tiring attack.

Off the ground: Jacques Kallis, of South African, takes evasive action in Melbourne yesterday Photograph: AFP

Clark steers Australia to World Cup

Pete Davies reports from Calcutta
New Zealand 164
Australia 165-5
Australia win by 5 wickets

Eden Gardens did the women's World Cup proud yesterday, with a largely female crowd of some 50,000 bringing a cheerful atmosphere to Australia's contest with New Zealand in the final.

They were rewarded with a typically alert and combative performance by the side that has always looked the most complete outfit here; Australia won by five wickets with two overs and two balls to spare, and the outcome was rarely in doubt.

After New Zealand chose to bat, the opener Debbie Hockley scored a brave and responsible 79 off 121 balls, which, against an attack of Australia's quality, was certainly the best innings we have seen in this tournament. Unfortunately, apart from their captain, Maia Lewis, who contributed 10 runs to a fourth-wicket partnership of 38, no one stayed with Hockley for long.

The Australian strike bowler Cathryn Fitzpatrick was quick, recording figures of 10-2-22-1. Her partner in pace Bronwyn Calver is not as rapid, but she moved the ball about, removing Hockley's opening partner, Emily Drumm, lbw for six with a beautiful delivery. Australia's fielding was similarly relentless, typified by the sizzling 30-yard throw from point to the bowlers' end by Michelle Goszko that ran out Kathryn Ramel with a direct hit.

New Zealand were all out for 164 in their penultimate over, not much of a total, but there was a doubt over whether Australia could bat down the order as they have not needed to here. They proved they could, although their opener and captain, Belinda Clark, shouldered much of the load with a steady 52 off 81 balls, her 11th fifty in 40 international one-day innings. It took a sharp return catch by the off-spinner Catherine Campbell to remove her.

Too much of New Zealand's work in the field was otherwise sloppy. Clark's departure left Australia on 117 for 3 in the 34th over. Karen Rolton and Melanie Jones stayed calm and put the bad balls away to bring the target inexorably closer.

New Zealand's shortage of quality bowling was exposed when, with Australia needing only nine runs off the last six overs, Ramel came on, and promptly bowled two wides in her first three balls.

Bronwyn Calver took Australia home with a four and a single off Ramel, as they became world champions for the fourth time in six competitions, and deservedly so.

It was unfortunate that eight of England's beaten semi-finalists did not stay to watch them do it. It is understandable that they wanted to go; that they were allowed to do so, however, did not go down well here.

SAILING

Brindabella edges Exile in tight finish

The Australian maxi Brindabella won the Sydney-to-Hobart race yesterday in a cat and mouse finish with the Hong Kong pocket maxi Exile, breaking the four-year "Hobart hoodoo" of its owner and skipper, George Snow.

Brindabella, the race favourite, took line honours on Hobart's Derwent River just nine minutes ahead of Exile, after a tactical duel up the river in light fickle winds and an outgoing tide.

Brindabella took two days, 23 hours, 22 minutes and 48 seconds for the 630-nautical mile race, after duelling with Exile for almost the entire race along Australia's east coast. The two boats were never more than one nautical mile apart for most of the last 200 miles of the race. "It was one of the most exciting yacht race finishes in the world," said Snow, who felt confident of winning only in the last five minutes.

Brindabella's victory ends a series of disappointing campaigns for Snow, a Canberra property developer. In the past four years, Brindabella has twice finished second and twice been forced to retire with damage to gear.

"It's great – no more Hobart hoodoos," an exuberant Snow said after docking at Hobart's Constitution Dock.

Snow led the initial 115-strong fleet out of Sydney Harbour last Friday, followed closely by the Swedish maxi, Nicorette, and Exile. But Nicorette was forced to retire with structural damage.

Warwick Miller, an expatriate Australian businessman, made a bad start on Exile but overhauled her bigger rivals on Saturday as they sailed into strong southerly winds. By Sunday, Brindabella had regained the lead under spinnaker and the two boats began a match race off the coast of Tasmania, with the rest of the fleet off the pace.

SKIING

Remarkable Maier reveals liking for downhill

Hermann Maier, the sensation of this season's Cup circuit with seven top-three finishes in eight races, extended his lead in the overall standings yesterday when he edged his fellow Austrian Andreas Schifferer by 0.03sec for his first World Cup downhill victory.

Maier, who has shot to the top of both the overall and downhill rankings in only his second full season on the circuit, skied Bormio's icy Stelvio piste in 2min 1.59sec. He put up a brilliant, aggressive performance on the top half of the course to lead Schifferer by over half a second at the midway split and coped with difficult light to hold on for a victory that surprised him.

"My tactics were to take it relatively easy today and then go for victory tomorrow [in a second downhill]," he said. "I made a few mistakes near the bottom and I found it difficult to see. One minute I was in sunlight, the next in darkness and I very nearly lost it completely."

Werner Franz claimed his first top-three finish of the season in 2:01.79 and Stefan Eberharter took fourth in 2:01.83 as the Austrians tightened their grip on the World Cup speed events. Norway's Lasse Kjus was the best placed non-Austrian, fifth in 2:02.01.

Italy's Kristian Ghedina, the joint leader of the downhill standings with Schifferer before yesterday's race, managed only 14th place in a disappointing 2:02.62.

DARTS

Harrington survives hiccup

The opening day of the World Darts Championship at Purfleet, Essex, witnessed an erratic, but ultimately convincing performance from the fifth seed, Rod Harrington, in beating John Ferrell 3-0 yesterday.

Harrington won the first set in three straight legs and then won the first two legs of the second set. He was hitting trebles and doubles at will and appeared certain to romp home.

However, the match was halted for minor repairs to a computer showing the scores and Harrington's form suffered a similar hiccup.

"I was going like a bomb," he said, "but after they stopped the match I found it difficult to get going again and I was lucky to win the set."

Ferrell missed 10 shots at doubles as he tried to clinch the second set and Harrington scrambled through on his seventh attempt at a double. With his confidence regained, he took the third set by three legs to one.

ICE HOCKEY

Steelers steeled for Storm storm

Sheffield Steelers are expecting a backlash from Manchester Storm today with both clubs knowing they face a make-or-break Express Cup tie at the Nynex Arena.

Alex Dampier's side did not have a happy Christmas as Steelers suffered two shock home defeats to Nottingham Panthers and Bracknell Bees in the space of three days.

But Sheffield are Manchester's bogey side this season as they have won three and drawn one of their four meetings, with Storm in need of a Cup tonic after one win from six games in the competition this season. Both sides, two of the favourites to lift the trophy, are in danger of the humiliation of not even reaching the semi-finals.

The Sheffield coach, Clyde Tuyl, said of his side: "I'm sure they will want to settle this now."

Newcastle Cobras, meanwhile, have started their Express Cup campaign in identical fashion to the Superleague – with a string of defeats – but are now hoping history that repeats itself. Cobras lost eight in a row in the league before a 5-4 home victory over Nottingham Panthers – their opponents today after a run of five successive Cup losses.

The other game of the night is the Thames Valley derby, with Bracknell at home to Basingstoke, with Bison having won two and lost three of the five meetings so far.

SPORTING DIGEST

American football

NFL Play-offs first round: American Football Conference: New England Patriots 17 Miami Dolphins 3. National Football Conference: Tampa Bay 20 Detroit Lions 10.

Athletics

Khalid Skah, the former Olympic 10,000 metres champion from Morocco, has announced he will take part in the County Durham International Cross-Country on Saturday.

Basketball

NBA: Minnesota 93 Detroit 99; Miami 101 Indiana 90; Seattle 106 Phoenix 97; Utah 89 Vancouver 88; Sacramento 92 Philadelphia 90; Boston 108 LA Lakers 102; Portland 82 San Antonio 79.

EASTERN CONFERENCE
ATLANTIC DIVISION

	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	19	9	.679	–
Orlando	17	12	.586	2½
New York	16	12	.571	3
New Jersey	15	12	.556	3½
Boston	14	13	.566	4½
Washington	15	15	.500	5
Philadelphia	7	20	.259	11½
CENTRAL DIVISION				
Chicago	19	9	.679	–
Atlanta	19	10	.655	½
Indiana	19	10	.643	1
Cleveland	17	10	.630	1½
Charlotte	17	11	.607	2
Milwaukee	13	15	.464	6
Detroit	13	17	.433	7
Toronto	4	24	.143	15

WESTERN CONFERENCE
MIDWEST DIVISION

	W	L	Pct	GB
Utah	18	11	.621	–
San Antonio	17	11	.607	½
Houston	15	10	.600	1
Minnesota	14	14	.500	3½
Vancouver	10	19	.345	8
Dallas	5	23	.179	12½
Denver	2	25	.074	15
PACIFIC DIVISION				
Seattle	23	6	.793	–
LA Lakers	22	7	.759	1
Phoenix	17	9	.654	4½
Portland	17	10	.630	5
Sacramento	11	19	.367	12½
Golden State	7	20	.259	15
LA Clippers	6	24	.200	17½

Cricket

SECOND UNDER-19 TEST
(Fochville, SA; third day of four)
South Africa won toss
SOUTH AFRICA UNDER-19 – First Innings 506 for 9 dec (M van Wyk 158, G Bodi 69, J Myburgh 64, G P Swann 4-90).
ENGLAND UNDER-19 – First Innings
(Overnight: 77 for 5)

G R Napier c Street b Rudolph	32
J C Powell b Mpitsang	1
C P Schofield b Rudolph	21
P J Franks not out	119
†N J Wilton c Street b Samsodien	29
J O Grove c van Wyk b Creed	12
Extras (b4 lb8 w2 nb10)	24
Total (112.4 overs)	291

Fall (cont): 8-84 7-117 8-128 9-203
Bowling: Mpitsang 18-3-57-1, Creed 15.4-3-56-3, Samsodien 16-2-43-2, Rudolph 39-17-62-3, Bodi 20-6-41-1; Kent 4-0-14-0.
Second Innings

S D Peters not out	21
R W T Key not out	8
Extras (lb2 nb5)	7
Total (for 0, 17 overs)	36

To bat: M A Gough, *O A Shah, G P Swann, G R Napier, J C Powell, C P Schofield, P J Franks, J O Grove, †N J Wilton.
Bowling (to date): Creed 5-2-16-0, Mpitsang 5-1-9-0, Samsodien 3-1-5-0, Rudolph 3-2-4-0.
Umpires: K Hurter and A O'Connell
WOMEN'S WORLD CUP FINAL
(Calcutta)
New Zealand won toss
NEW ZEALAND

D Hockley b Fitzpatrick	79
E Drumm b Calver	6
S Fruin c Clark b Calver	8
K Withers c Price b Mason	5
*M Lewis lbw b Mango	10
K Ramel run out	1
C Nicholson lbw b Rolton	2
S McLauchlan st Price b Rolton	8
†R Rolls c Calver b Mason	18
C Campbell not out	3
K Brown run out	1
Extras (lb10 w13)	23
Total (49.3 overs)	154

Fall: 1-14 2-36 3-49 4-87 5-99 6-104 7-125 8-155 9-157
Bowling: Fitzpatrick 10-2-22-1, Calver 10-1-29-2, Mason 9.3-0-31-2, Mango 6-1-28-1, Rolton 6-1-25-2, Fahey 8-1-18-0.
AUSTRALIA

*B Clark c and b Campbell	52
J Broadbent c Lewis b Ramel	15
M Goszko b Withers	37
K Rolton c Brown b Ramel	24
M Jones b Withers	17
B Calver not out	7
O Mango not out	0
Extras (lb5 lb3 w3 nb1)	12
Total (for 5, 47.4 overs)	165

Fall: 1-36 2-107 3-117 4-153 5-160
Did not bat: C Mason, †J Price, C Fitzpatrick, A Fahey.
Bowling: Withers 10-2-23-2, Nicholson 10-3-26-0, Brown 1-0-10-0, Ramel 4.4-0-23-2, Campbell 10-1-36-1, McLauchlan 9-0-26-0, Hockley 3-0-12-0.
Australia won by five wickets.
Umpires: S Choudhury and A Bhattacharjee.

Darts

SKOL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (Purfleet, Essex) Group B: B Anderson (Eng) bt G Verner (US) 3-1. Group C: R Harrington (Eng) bt J Ferrell (Eng) 3-0. Group F: P Manley (Eng) bt J Lowe (Eng) 3-0. Group H: A Warner (Eng) bt S Brown (US) 3-1.
BRITISH OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS (Earls Court, London): Men's singles (best of three sets): Quarter-finals: P Davies (Wal) bt J Walton (York) 2-1, D Askew (Surrey) bt R Hawkins (Sussex) 2-1, C Monk (Herts) bt P Hogan (W Midlands) 2-0, L Wallace (Scot) bt P Wright (Norfolk) 2-0. Semi-finals: Davies bt Askew 2-1; Monk bt Wallace 2-1. Final: Monk bt Davies 2-0. Women's singles (best of five legs): Semi-finals: T Gulliver (Warwickshire) bt C Howell (Cumbria) 3-0; M Solomons (London) bt F Hoenselaar (Neth) 3-0. Final: Gulliver bt Solomons 3-2.

Hockey

WOMEN'S UNDER 21 TERRITORIAL TOURNAMENT (Milton Keynes; Second day of three): West 2 South 0, East 1 Midlands 3, North 1 West 0, South 0 Midlands 3. Standings: 1 Midlands (P3 Pts9); 2 North (3-6); 3 West (3-4); 4 East (2-1); 5 South (3-0).

Ice hockey

NHL: NY Rangers 4 Boston 3; Chicago 2 Anaheim 0.
EASTERN CONFERENCE
NORTHEAST DIVISION

	W	L	T	F	APts
Pittsburgh	19	12	8	104	90 46
Montreal	20	15	5	114	97 45
Ottawa	18	17	4	99	90 40
Boston	17	16	5	99	101 40
Carolina	14	20	5	100	110 33
Buffalo	13	18	6	88	100 32
ATLANTIC DIVISION					
New Jersey	24	10	2	111	71 50
Philadelphia	21	10	7	107	85 49
Washington	16	15	8	105	106 40
NY Rangers	12	17	12	104	112 36
NY Islanders	15	18	5	103	106 35
Florida	14	20	5	101	115 33
Tampa Bay	7	23	7	66	114 21
WESTERN CONFERENCE					
CENTRAL DIVISION					
Dallas	25	9	5	124	81 55
Detroit	24	9	7	137	96 55
St Louis	22	13	6	120	99 50
Phoenix	16	16	7	107	106 39
Chicago	13	18	7	83	86 33
Toronto	13	19	5	85	109 31
PACIFIC DIVISION					
Colorado	20	8	11	120	95 51
Los Angeles	15	16	5	105	106 35
Anaheim	13	19	7	92	119 33
San Jose	14	19	4	91	104 32
Edmonton	11	19	9	91	116 31
Calgary	11	21	8	101	120 30
Vancouver	11	21	6	107	128 28

EXPRESS CUP: Sheffield Steelers 5 Bracknell Bees 6, Ayr Scottish Eagles 5 Manchester Storm 3, Basingstoke Bisons 2 Newcastle 1 (OT)

Rugby League

Adam Griffin, the 22-year-old former Salford goal-kicking utility back, is joining another Super League club, Sheffield, on trial. Griffin played for Sale rugby union club last season.

The British Amateur Rugby League Association is to investigate an ill-tempered Yorkshire Cup final between Siddal and Featherstone Lions at Halifax in which four players were sent off, three others sent to the sin-bin and two women spectators involved in a fight. Sunday's match, won 9-6 by Featherstone, boiled over as early as the first minute when the Siddal player-coach Andy Hancock, one of four players eventually dismissed, went to the sin-bin following a midfield mêlée.

Skiing

**ALPINE WORLD CUP (Bormio, It) Men's downhill: 1 H Maier (Aut) 2min 0.159sec; 2 A Schifferer (Aut) 2:01.62; 3 W Franz (Aut) 2:01.79; 4 S Eberharter (Aut) 2:01.83; 5 L Kjus (Nor) 2:02.01; 6 Christian Greber (Austria) 2:02.18; 7 W Besse (Swit) 2:02.24; 8 R Assinger (Aut) 2:02.31; 9 J-L Cretier (Fr) 2:02.40; 10 H Trinkl (Aut) 2:02.45; 11 P Rungaldier (It) 2:02.58; 12 N Burtin (Fr) 2:02.60; 13 D Cuche (Swit) 2:02.61; 14 K Ghedina (It) 2:02.62, 15 E Podivinsky (Can) 2:02.68; 16 B Stemmle (Can) 2:02.75; 17 P Vitalini (It) 2:02.94; 18 L Sauder (Can) 2:02.96; 19 W Pereshoner (It) 2:03.29; 20= S Krauss (Ger), X Gigandet (Swit) 2:03.54; 22 P Accola (Swit) 2:03.58; 23 B Kernen (Swit) 2:03.71; 24 K Sivertsen (Nor) 2:03.82; 25= F Marin-Cudraz (Fr), A Duvillard (Fr) 2:03.85; 27 A Brezavsek (Slovan) 2:03.87; 28 L Galli (It) 2:03.88; 29 A Hoffmann (Swit) 2:03.93; 30 E Seletto (It) 2:04.05; 31 G Mader (Aut) 2:04.22; 32 A J Kitt (US) 2:04.25; 33= O Pretot (Fr), P Ortlieb (Aut) 2:04.29; 35 M Brunner (Ger) 2:04.42; 36 H Tschiemer (Swit) 2:04.54; 37 J Hasler (Liech) 2:04.67; 38 M Feller (It) 2:04.72; 39 G Bell (GB) 2:05.11; 40 A Groenvold (Nor) 2:05.52; 41 C Forrer (Swit) 2:05.65; 42 L Sprenger (It) 2:05.89; 43 B Zekoun (Cz Rep) 2:07.05; 44 Y Takeuchi (Japan) 2:07.51. Leading World Cup downhill standings: 1 H Maier (Aut) 209pts; 2 A Schifferer (Aut) 202; 3 K Ghedina (It) 140; 4 L Kjus (Nor) 137; 5 S Eberharter (Aut) 136; 6 R Assinger (Aut) 113; 7 J-L Cretier (Fr) 109; 8 W Franz (Aut) 92; 9 F Strobl (Aut) 90; 10= H Trinkl (Aut), C Greber (Aut) 77, 12 P Rungaldier (It) 71; 13 W Besse (Swit) 63; 14 K Aamodt (Nor) 58; 15 N Burtin (Fr) 56; 16 D Cuche (Swit) 54; 17 J Strobl (Aut) 50; 18 F Nyberg (Swe) 40; 19= W Pereshoner (It), L Cattaneo (It) 35. Overall World Cup standings: 1 Maier 589pts, 2 Eberharter 446; 3 M Von Grünigen (Swit) 390; 40 Aamodt 323; 8 Strobl 308; 8 Schifferer 301; 7 Kjus 239; 8 C Mayer (Aut) 232, 8 H Knaus (Aut) 220; 10 S Locher (Swit) 199; 11 Ghedina 178; 12 P Accola (Swit) 173; 13 F C Jagge (Nor) 168; 14 S Vogleiter (Aut) 156; 15 A Tomba (It) 141; 16 T Grandi (Can) 139; 17 Franz 136; 18 T Stangassinger (Aut) 135; 19 G Mader (Aut) 134; 20 Greber 124.

Table tennis

Desmond Douglas is poised to come home to play for Darlington in the Premier Division of the British league. Douglas, 42, has commuted from his Walsall home to play for Rouen in France for the last three years, after leaving Market Drayton's Grove club in 1994. Now Darlington have offered him terms he seems certain to accept, and he will spearhead a challenge by the County Durham club to win the title from their two close rivals, Launceston and Horsham. Darlington have also signed English No 4, Bradley Billington, from Derbyshire and are set to release the England captain, Kevin Satchell, to Horsham.

BRITISH LEAGUE Premier Division: Muns Estates Progress 11 Yymura (Hyde) 3; Drumchapel Glasgow 5 St Neots (Cambs) 9; DML White Hart Launceston 9 Colley Hyundai (Pontypool) 5; Horsham 7 Darlington 7.

Tennis

Steffi Graf will not play in next month's Australian Open. Graf, 28, four times a winner of the Australian Open, has not played since she was beaten by South Africa's Amanda Coetzer in the French Open quarter-finals last June and later underwent an operation on her left knee. "After such a long absence I do not feel in good enough form to do myself justice," Graf said in a statement. The German aims to return for the Tokyo WTA tournament, which begins on 2 February.

FIXTURES

Football

7.30 unless stated
NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION
Norwich v Portsmouth (7.45)
SCOTTISH LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION
Hamilton v Airdrie
RYMAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE Second Division: Braintree v Witham. **Guardian Insurance Cup third round:** Boreham Wood v Dagenham & Redbridge; Camberley v Oxford City; Sutton Utd v Basingstoke. **Third round replay:** Bedford v St Albans.
UNIBOND LEAGUE CUP Third round replay: Belper v Bishop Auckland.
UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE First Division: Chichester v Arundel; Eastbourne Town v Hailsham; Hassocks v Peacehaven & Telscombe. Horsham YMCA v Mile Oak; Littlehampton v Wick; Ringmer v Burgess Hill; Saltdean v Redhill; Selsey v Portfield; Shoreham v Pagham; Whitehawk v Langney Sports.
NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE Premier Division: Arnold v Hucknall. *League Cup third round:* Armthorpe Welfare v Glasshoughton Welfare; Denaby v Hall Road Rangers; Wolsbrough Bridge v Curzon Ashton.
JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE CUP: Newbury v Bemerton Heath Harlequins. **Russell Cotes Cup:** Lymington v Andover.
PONTINS LEAGUE Premier Division: *Manchester Utd v Leeds (7.0) (at Bury FC).* **First Division:** Oldham v Grimsby (7.0) *(at Stalybridge Celtic FC).*

Rugby Union

ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP One: Bath v Northampton (3.0); Leicester v Newcastle (7.45); London Irish v Saracens (7.30); Sale v Gloucester (7.30); Wasps v Richmond (7.30).

Ice hockey

EXPRESS CUP: Bracknell Bees v Basingstoke Bison (8.0); Manchester Storm v Sheffield Steelers (7.30); Newcastle Cobras v Nottingham Panthers (7.0).

TODAY'S NUMBER

10

The South Korean cities that will host football's World Cup finals in 2002. The cities are: Seoul, Pusan, Inchon, Ulsan, Taegu, Taejon, Kwangju, Suwon, Chonju and Sogwipo. All the venues will be new stadiums, with four already under construction.

Resourceful Rudge still reigns against all the odds

FA CUP COUNTDOWN

BY PHIL SHAW

It was Boxing Day. The bus bringing Port Vale back from a 4-0 pounding at Preston had just dropped their new manager off at their rusting, rotting ground. Bottom of the Third Division by the length of the M6, their coffers were also emptier than a chairman's promise. "I remember sitting in this office," says John Rudge, "and thinking: 'Where the bloody hell do we go from here?'"

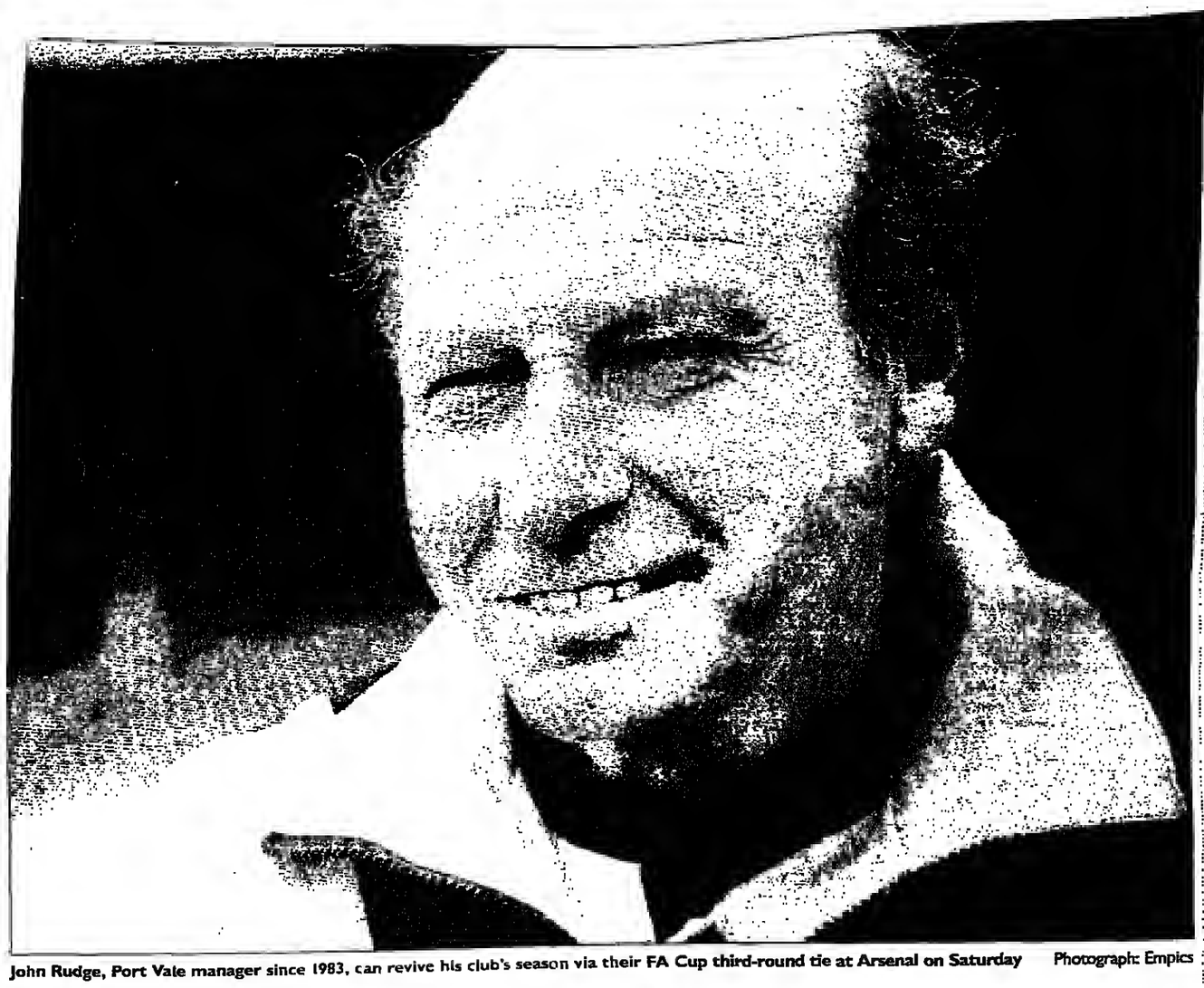
Fourteen Christmases later, Rudge has cause to ponder the same quandary. Vale, on the fringe of the First Division play-off zone in mid-November, face a relegation battle after six successive defeats – equalling the sequence which led to his promotion in succession to John McGrath in 1983.

The immediate, factual answer to Rudge's question illustrates how far Vale have come under his understated stewardship. On Saturday they visit Arsenal in the third round of the FA Cup, after which he will have managed the Burslem club in competitive fixtures against every League side except Chelsea, Coventry and Wycombe.

To summarise the story behind this remarkable fact: after narrowly failing to retrieve a lost cause in that first season, Rudge has presided over three promotions and a further relegation. Vale have also made three trips to Wembley, enjoyed cup-tie jaunts to Old Trafford, Anfield, Goodison, Villa Park, Elland Road and Italy, as well as coming out even in derbies with once-dominant Stoke City. Not had for a reign that opened with a home defeat by Lincoln before 2,800 diehards.

Alex Ferguson, whose faith in pure footballing values Rudge shares, reckons everyone connected with Port Vale should go down on their knees and thank the Lord for him. Yet the 53-year-old Rudge is under no illusions that his loyalty will be reciprocated if the present slide is not arrested. By the same token, he takes confidence from the knowledge that he has been within one defeat of the sack "more than once" and bounced back.

Exactly 10 years ago, when Vale were floundering in the Third, they met non-League Macclesfield in the third round.



John Rudge, Port Vale manager since 1983, can revive his club's season via their FA Cup third-round tie at Arsenal on Saturday Photograph: Empics

"We didn't play well but a lad called Kevin Finney got the winner late on," Rudge recalls. "I'd almost certainly have gone if we hadn't got through, but then we drew Tottenham at home."

The Spurs match changed the course of the club's history. Rudge can still picture Terry Venables inspecting a Vale Park quagmire and telling Ossie Ardiles: "This one's not for you." The decision gave Vale a psychological fillip and they won 2-1 with goals by two Rudge stalwarts, Phil Sproson and Ray Walker.

"The club had been yo-yoing between the Third and Fourth for 30 years. That Cup run helped put us back on the map. The TV and advertising revenue it brought in also helped us buy better players."

Rudge had already demonstrated his ability to wheel and deal, paying Rhyl £5,000 for a striker called Andy Jones and selling him to Charlton for £350,000. The pattern of unearthing rough diamonds and turning them into gems has become a trademark.

"When I bought Darren Beckford for £15,000 from Manchester City we were so hard up our fans had to raise half the money. We got £925,000 from Norwich for him.

"Later I paid £15,000 to a little club named Moor Green for Ian Taylor. We ended up taking £1m from Sheffield Wednesday for him and he's now doing brilliantly at Aston Villa."

In the 12 months between the vanquishing of Venables, Vale's biggest signings soared from the £40,000 bracket to £200,000. Even so, it was not until earlier this season that Rudge bought his first £500,000 player, the Lincoln winger Gareth Ainsworth.

The anatomy of the transfer was archetypal Rudge. "I'd signed Robin van der Laan from a Dutch club for £80,000 and sold him to Derby for £475,000 plus Lee Mills. I went straight out and bought Jon McCarthy from York. I'd offered £300,000 which is what I thought he was worth, but they were insisting on £450,000.

"I told the chairman [Bill Bell] we should go for it because we were effectively getting two for the price of one. We eventually sold Jon to Birmingham for £1.5m and replaced him with Gareth."

Among his other protégés are Steve Guppy, Robbie Earle and Mark Bright. "I've sold £7m worth of players," Rudge says. "Although I've reinvested part of that, a lot has gone into improving the ground.

"When you've got resources like ours you have to buy them cheap and sell them dear. I think building teams is my big strength, but other managers picking off your players is forever weakening your hand. And while you're reconstructing you've got to keep winning games."

Vale can not afford a full-time scout. Instead, Rudge relies on tip-offs from a network of friends in contacts built up over 35 years. He spends four nights a week watching matches and attempts to be "like an encyclopedia of players".

"People ask why I don't delegate, but there's no one to delegate to. There's only me, Billy Dearden [assistant manager] and Mark Grew [youth coach] running the show. There can't be any other First Division outfit – competing with Manchester City, Nottingham Forest, Wolves and Sheffield United – run by three blokes!"

There have been tempting offers, from Preston, Bradford and much closer to home. Like a man with a mission, Rudge has resisted them. Now he is looking to the trip to Arsenal as an opportunity, like the tie against the other half of north London's élite, to revive morale and raise funds.

Although he played at Highbury only once, for Bournemouth reserves, Rudge spent a week with the Gunners 20 years ago, studying Don Howe's coaching methods. The likely clash between the £7.5m Dennis Bergkamp and his compatriot Mark Snijders, a centre-back Vale picked up free from Alkmaar, encapsulates the disparity between the clubs.

The chance "to show Burslem to Bergkamp", as he puts it, could provide an interesting chapter for the autobiography on which he is working. The provisional title, *Managing To Survive*, could be seen as tempting fate given Vale's parlous position, but Arsène Wenger should be warned that John Rudge's reputation owes more to success against the odds than to mere survival.

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

Defense the key for Bucs and Patriots

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the New England Patriots shut down their opponents' most dangerous offensive players on Sunday to emerge victorious in their respective NFL play-off wild card games.

The Buccaneers, appearing in their first play-off game in 15 years, bottled up the elusive Barry Sanders and used a balanced offense to beat the Detroit Lions 20-10 in the NFC match-up.

"It feels great, we've come a long way," said the Bucs coach, Tony Dungy. "Our defense did a great job with everything, and our offense in the first half did a great job controlling the ball."

In Foxboro, Massachusetts, the Patriots hounded the Miami Dolphins quarterback Dan Marino with constant pass-rushing pressure and came away with a 17-3 win after sacking Marino four times in their AFC game.

"This is as good as you hope your 'D' can play," said the Patriots coach, Pete Carroll, about his defense. "I just hope we can keep this up."

Sanders, who this season became the third player to rush for more than 2,000 yards, gained just 65 yards on 18 carries for the Lions, who again had a player taken off on a stretcher.

Quarterback Scott Mitchell lay motionless on the field for some 15 minutes after taking a blow to the head late in the third quarter. He was later diagnosed as having concussion.

Detroit's play-off-clinching defeat of the New York Jets last week has been overshadowed by a spinal injury that ended the career of linebacker Reggie Brown.

Tampa Bay led 20-0 when Mitchell was injured, through touchdowns from Horace Copeland and Mike Alstott and two field goals. Back-up Frank Reich took over at quarterback and engineered a Detroit touchdown drive in the fourth quarter.

The defensive job on Sanders ended the running back's record streak of 100-yard-plus games at 14.

Tampa Bay advanced to a divisional play-off at the home of the defending Super Bowl champions, Green Bay Packers, on Sunday. New England earned a match at the AFC Central champions, Pittsburgh Steelers, on Saturday.

The rest of the play-off picture has the *Minnesota Vikings* going to San Francisco to meet the 49ers on Saturday, while the Denver Broncos play their AFC semi-final in Kansas City against the Chiefs on Sunday.

Everton to seal Madar deal

Everton will complete the final formalities to bring the fiery French forward Mickaël Madar to Goodison Park early this week.

Madar, who turned down trials at West Ham and Celtic, plus a move to Italy, has signed a contract but has not been registered in time for this weekend's FA Cup tie with Newcastle.

The 29 year-old is all set to fly in to join the Merseyside strugglers but problems over acquiring international clearance from the Spanish FA – which was closed over the holiday period – prevented him from playing in Sunday's 3-2 victory over Bolton.

Howard Kendall will now not be able to field a feared partnership with Duncan Ferguson until the relegation battle at Crystal Palace on 10 January.

Kendall said: "I would have liked to have played Madar against Bolton but it has been a little bit awkward with the holidays in Spain and over here in terms of trying to complete documentation and clearances.

"It's been complicated and frustrating. Hopefully, we will now be able to play him against Palace. He definitely can't play against Newcastle."

Madar has joined on a free transfer but his wages will make him one of Goodison Park's highest earners.

Madar left Deportivo La Coruña after a row with Brazilian coach Carlos Alberto Silva – because he did not like a pre-match meal that included rice. The following day saw a training ground bust-up over a heavy tackle on Brazilian midfielder Mauro Silva, with the coach taking the side of his countryman. Silva said: "Madar is a stirrer. I don't want any more of him." before banning him from training for 10 days.

Madar was told he could leave despite having two years of his contract left and now Kendall has taken a chance on the talented goalscorer who prefers to play off a big striker, and the 6ft 4in Ferguson could be the player to bring out the best in him.

Taylor move goes on hold

Welsh international Gareth Taylor's move from First Division Sheffield United to Utrecht is in doubt. The striker appeared to finish his Blades' career with a flourish yesterday by scoring in United's 4-1 defeat of Charlton. He scored the first and then tossed his shirt into the crowd at the end as fans chanted his name. This appears to have led to the United board getting cold feet over a £700,000 deal.

The United board are to discuss the situation within the next seven days, particularly as Utrecht have been told they might be able to sign fellow forward Jan Age Fjortoft. Should Fjortoft leave, the chance that Taylor would follow is remote.

Carbone's two-match ban

Benito Carbone's chances of re-establishing himself in the Sheffield Wednesday side have been hampered by a two-match ban. The Italian forward was booked for the fifth time this season for a foul in the 1-1 draw at Leicester and will be suspended from 11 January.

He only returned to the starting line-up because of a two-match ban for his compatriot Paolo Di Canio, who is available for Saturday's FA Cup third-round tie against Watford.

Which games Carbone sits out will depend on the result at Vicarage Road as he will miss the Premiership game at Leeds, plus either a Cup replay, a fourth-round tie or a League match against Wimbledon. He will be joined on the sidelines by the defender Dejan Stefanovic, who was sent off for two bookings at Leicester and will miss either the Leeds game or any Cup replay against Watford.

The West Ham captain Steve Lomas is facing an Football Association charge for his altercation with the referee Gerald Ashby. Lomas is heading for an extra ban and a fine after Ashby turned down his appeal to change his mind about the incident. The midfielder is accused of violent conduct for putting his hands on Ashby to turn him round after he turned down an appeal for a penalty at Blackburn.

Ashby's decision to stand by his verdict means Lomas is certain to miss the next three games, including the Coca-Cola Cup tie with Arsenal next Tuesday.

However, Lomas will also be called up before the FA in early January with the prospect of an additional punishment. There is a recent precedent after Arsenal's Emmanuel Petit manhandled the referee Paul Durkin and Lomas could suffer similar treatment.

Lomas claims he was only trying to draw the referee's attention while he was running away, but a lack of video evidence has not helped his case.

– Alan Nixon

HOCKEY

Title target for Midlands

The Midlands appear poised to win the Women's Under-21 Territorial Tournament title as they overcame the defending champions, East, at the Milton Keynes National Stadium 3-1 yesterday.

Liz Aldus provided East with a fine start to the second day of the championship, finding the net in the 11th minute. Midlands, however, soon claimed an equaliser as a quickly taken free hit from outside the circle was deflected on by Louisa Turney for Lesley Irvine to score at close range.

Midlands then won a series of penalty corners. But it was not until the 25th minute, at their sixth set-piece, that Sally Wright gave them the lead.

After the restart, Lucy Hayman was judged to have brought down Kate Sharland. The goalkeeper made amends, however, saving the penalty stroke from Nicola Hickton. Midland's third goal came midway through the half when Natalie Hannah scored at another well-worked penalty corner.

In their second game of the day, the Midlands again beat the pointless and luckless South 3-0, but it was not until the 49th minute that they eventually overcame a resolute South defence in which the Clifton goalkeeper, Liz Storey, and Ealing's Jennifer Cornelius were outstanding. Wright, with two penalty corner strikes in three minutes, killed off South's resistance and a third goal came from Natalie Hannah.

South had earlier gone down 2-0 to the West, who went on to lose 1-0 to the North.

– Bill Colwill

Possible successor to Rindt and Lauda looks ready to carry hopes of a nation

A young Austrian has a hard act to follow in taking over the Formula One mantle of Gerhard Berger both at the wheel of a competitive car and as a focus of national interest.

In the first of a series on newcomers to top flight sport, *Derick Allsop* considers the task that faces Alexander Wurz.

NEW FACES FOR '98

ALEXANDER WURZ

Embarking on a first full season in Formula One is a prospect daunting enough for any driver, but when the job carries the added responsibility of upholding a nation's distinguished tradition, it might be considered too onerous even to contemplate.

Austria's Alexander Wurz finds himself in precisely that situation as he begins a regular drive with Benetton, taking over the wheel for team and country from Gerhard Berger.

For more than 30 years, an Austrian driver has been at the forefront of grand prix racing. Up to 1970, it was the highly gifted Jochen Rindt, the first posthumous world champion. Then came Niki Lauda, champion in 1975, '77 and '84. Berger accepted the baton and although he never won the title he had 10 grand prix victories and enormous affection to ease the parting at the end of last season.

The indications are that 23-year-old Wurz has the talent and temperament to be a worthy successor. He acquitted himself admirably in three races as Berger's understudy last summer, concluding his stint with third place in the British Grand Prix.

But how about the little matter of representing Austria after Rindt, Lauda and Berger?

"I don't feel any pressure from the Austrian journalists or anything like that," he said. "Of course I am a patriot and proud to be the Austrian driver in Formula One now, but I drive for my own satisfaction, not to be Austria's next star.

"Since Rindt, we have always had an Austrian driver among the best. Why that is I do not know. We are only a small country. But even if we knew the secret we would not tell!"

For Wurz, the inspiration was not so much the achievements of his celebrated countrymen as a more modest influence closer to hand. His father, Franz, raced and although he did not become one of the luminaries, a natural path was paved for young Alexander.

"My father was a driver so I grew up on the circuits," he said. "It was a way of life for me from a very early age. At school I never wanted to be a pilot or a doctor or a lawyer like the other boys. I wanted only to be a racing driver."

As an Austrian schoolboy he inevitably found recreations on skis but always he turned to wheels for his competitive fulfilment. At the age of 12, he was a world champion on BMX bikes.

Three years later, he switched to karts, fertile ground for would-be car racers, and he duly graduated to Formula Four a further two years down the road. His championship successes at home and abroad propelled him on to Formula Three and another domestic title triumph.

In 1996, he was Rookie of the Year in the International Touring Car Championship and, as a member of the Joest Porsche team, became the youngest winner of the Le Mans 24-hour sportscar classic. He underlined his versatility with consistently competitive drives in GT races last year.

Wurz: Followed in his father's footsteps and has joined the élite at 23

Formula One, however, was his objective and Benetton-Renault summoned him on board as test and reserve driver. When illness struck down Berger mid-season, Wurz was promoted.

His impact was instant. He demonstrated not only exceptional pace but a technical appreciation many more senior drivers did not command. That podium finish at Silverstone confirmed the team's confidence and he was assigned a 1998 seat.

Wurz, who has already joined the Formula One commune in Monaco, said: "I would have chosen Benetton because it is where I have done a lot of work and testing. I had made my position in the team and did not want to give that away. There is a great atmosphere here.

"I always worked at the technical side as well as the racing. My technical interest goes back to my studies. I did an engineering and technical course although I stopped after four of the five years because the racing was becoming too big for me to continue."

Many predict it will become bigger still for Wurz. First of all, however, he must contend with fierce internal competition from another of the sport's tiros, the Italian Giancarlo Fisichella.

Wurz said: "He had the experience of racing with Jordan last year and they were quite strong, but it is important we don't fight together. The team needs us to pull in the same direction. We are getting closer and working together, and I think it will be closer on the circuit."

Within the team, there is optimism one or both of their fledgling drivers will regenerate some of the exciting momentum Michael Schumacher brought them in the early and mid-90s. Wurz, prudently, plays down his prospects of emulating the great German.

He said: "I don't want to be compared with Schumacher because that is dangerous and not easy for any driver. I will always give 100 per cent, that is all I can guarantee. I appreciate I am one of a few drivers in the world racing in Formula One, and it is hard to describe how special that feels.

"I don't know if this is the start of a new era for Benetton. They were third in the constructors' championship last year and if we could be third again this year that would be great. It will be very difficult for us to be first or second.

"I would like to finish consistently in the points and if I could get one or two podium places that would be good. It's my first year and I need to learn a lot before I talk about winning races."

This polite, lean young man has patently learned already the art of politically correct understatement but Fisichella, for one, will not be fooled he is a soft touch.

Significantly, Wurz added: "With the new car regulations this year it means everyone starts from zero. That could be an advantage for the younger drivers and I want to bring out my best. I am not here for a Sunday holiday drive."

هكذا من الاصل

29/TELEVISION & RADIO

TODAY'S PICK

Modern Times: The Shrine (9pm BBC2) That extraordinary weekend of Princess Diano's funeral, when that spontaneous national outpouring of grief/mass hysteria (delete according to point of view) turned the gardens of Kensington Palace into a sea of flowers, is caught in Richard Alwyn's cool, well-judged documentary. There's no commentary, mourners and sight-seers are simply allowed to express their opinions. There are dissenters. "A quiet madness" is how c...: man describes the scene, while another wonders how many dialysis machines could have been bought with the money spent on flowers.

Mr White Goes to Westminster (9pm C4) Political satirist Guy Jenkin probably sees himself as in the tradition of Jonathan Swift, but he just seems cosily cynical to me – and unfocused too in this look at a Martin Bell-like MP's education in the ways of Parliament. Perhaps a worse sin, however, is that it simply isn't amusing (Celia Imrie's impersonation of Christioe Hamilton apart). The real thing was far funnier, and hopefully the BBC will soon repeat their documentary, *Mr Bell Goes to Westminster.*

Mr White Goes to Westminster: 9pm C4

THE FILMS

Mrs Doubtfire (8pm BBC1) If, post-Louise Woodward, you haven't had enough of British nannies in America, then this sub-*Tootsie* comedy from 1993 has Robin Williams on good form as the voice-over artist who has to impersonate a Scots nanny in order to get to see his children.

Valmont (10.25pm BBC2) Made in the same year as *Dangerous Liasons*, and from the same source novel, Milos Forman's plush but static drame has Annette Beoing and Colin Firth in the Glenn Close and Joho Malkovich roles.

BBC1

7.00 **News; Local News; Weather** *(T) (2235059).*

7.10 **Children's BBC:** Poddington Peas *(2886547).* **7.15** Teletubbies *(2875856).* **7.40** The Busy World of Richard Scarry *(R) (S) (8202189).* **8.05** Casper Classics *(T) (6420634).* **8.30** The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest *(1197009).* **8.55** Blue Peter (S) (T) *(9739363).* **9.30** Sweet Valley High *(R) (1158924).* **9.50** Teletubbies (S) *(9738092).*

10.20 **News; Local News; Weather** *(T) (8626189)*

10.30 Film **The Shaggy Dog** (Charles Barton 1959 US). Boy gets turned into a dog by ancient curse, which is doubly unfortunate as his *father* (Fred MacMurray) is allergic to them *(77943).*

12.00 **Waiting for God** *(R) (S) (16617).* **12.30** Celebrity Ready, Steady, Cook *(S) (37769).* **1.00** News; Weather; Local News *(S) (T) (50974856).* **1.15** Neighbours *(S) (T) (73019634).*

1.35 Film **We're Back: a Dinosaur's Story** (Dick Zondag 1993 US). Animation. *Four dinosaurs are parachuted onto earth, where they befriend some children. Don't ask (S) (90370l1).*

2.40 **Vets in Practice** *(R) (4493092).* **3.10** The World's Strongest Man *(S) (T) (7287059).* **3.40** Balls to Africa *(S) (T) (6162769).* **4.30** Tom and Jerry *(7323740).* **4.40** A Flintstone Family Christmas *(S) (2099837).* **5.05** Newsround 97 (S) (T) *(9755818).*

5.35 **Neighbours** *(S) (T) (407301).*

6.00 **News; Weather** *(T) (855450).*

6.15 **Local News; Weather** *(T) (850905).*

6.30 **Watchdog – House Style.** What to do if your new dream home turns out to be a house of horrors *(S) (905).*

7.00 **Holiday.** Jill Dando visits Hong Kong, while *Maureen Driving School* Rees (one of 1997's more bizarre instant celebs) tries a fly-drive holiday to Southern Spain *(S) (T) (7092).*

7.30 **EastEnders.** Grant and Phil fight to save their marriages *(S) (T) (189).*

8.00 Film **Mrs Doubtfire** (Chris Columbus 1993 US). See *The Films*, above *(S) (5585).*

9.00 **News; Local News; Weather** *(T) (5479).*

9.30 **Mrs Doubtfire** *(S) (47214).*

10.30 **Review of the Year.** The death of Diana, New Labour's election victory, the handover of Hong Kong, The Spice Girls, *Teletubbies, Melinda Messenger,* and much more. David Dimbleby looks back at 1997 and, less agreeably, preaches a little sermon at the end of each segment *(S) (T) (9939924).*

11.45 Film **Carry On up the Khyber** (Gerald Thomas 1968 UK). From the golden period of the *Carry On* films, one of their best. Sid James, Charles *Hawtrey, Roy Castle, Peter Butterworth* and Terry Scott defend the North-Western Frontier of 1895 against Kenneth Williams' Khasi of Kalabar *(999382).*

1.10 Film **A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square** *(Ralph Thomas* 1979 US). Richard Jordan and David Niven stroll through this ho-hum mid-Atlantic bank heist caper (Followed by *Weather) (600851).*

REGIONS: Scot: 2.40pm Terry and June.

BBC2

7.05 **Kisses** *(R) (S) (7557585).* **7.50** The Phil Silvers Show *(R) (6641547).* **8.15** Great Mysteries and Myths of the Twentieth Century *(9522769).*

8.40 Film **42nd Street** (Lloyd Bacon 1933 US). "You're Getting to Be a Habit with Me" and, of course, "42nd Street", are the big numbers in this clunking but charming Busby Berkeley *choreographed backstage musical.* Ruby Keeler is the young understudy on whom the future of a big Broadway production depends – which is tough since she can't dance, can't sing and can't act *(T) (1469740).*

10.05 **The Great Romances of the Twentieth Century.** *Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford (7497905).*

10.30 Film **The Stratton Story** (Sam Wood 1949 US). James Stewart plays professional baseball pitcher Monty Stratton, who carried on playing despite losing a leg *(97970547).*

12.20 **Cambridge Folk Festival** *(S) (4142653).* **1.10** Fireman Sam (R) *(33357108).*

1.20 **The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures.** How a little knowledge in *maths increases the chance of winning in game shows (S) (T) (2834363).*

2.20 Film **The Crimson Pirate** (Richard Siodmak 1952 US). Bright and snappy buccaneer adventure with Burt Lancaster and his old circus partner Nick Cravat swinging gracefully from the rigging. *Good fun (T) (927189).*

4.00 **Everything to Play For** *(S) (818).*

4.30 Film **Vera Cruz** *(Robert Aldrich* 1954 US). Burt Lancaster again, this time teamed somewhat uneasily with Gary Cooper as a pair of cowboys who get involved in a plot to overthrow *Emperor Maxmillian during the Mexican Revolution of 1866 (58924).*

6.00 Film **The Man Who Never Was** (Ronald Neame 1955 UK). British intelligence officer Clifton Webb plans an *elaborate hoax in the spring of 1943* to fool the Germans into thinking the Allies are about to invade Greece, not Sicily. Gloria Grahame co-stars in this real-life tale *(47842566).*

7.45 **University Challenge.** *A transatlantic edition, with four of Britain's brightest against their American smart-alec counterparts (801672).*

8.15 **The Travel Show.** Juliet Morris in Philadelphia, Jim White goes skiing in Canada, and Fi Glover and Simon Calder are in Mexico *(S) (605769).*

9.00 **Modern Times: The Shrine.** See *Today's Pick*, above *(S) (1020030).*

10.15 **Stella Street** *(S) (T) (281672).*

10.25 Film **Valmont** (Milos Forman 1989 US). See *The Films*, above *(S) (60849924).*

12.35 Film **Women in Love** (Ken Russell 1969 UK) Russell's extravagant gothic sex fantasy, very loosely out of DH Lawrence – the worst bits of Lawrence. Glenda Jackson won her first of two Oscars as Gudrun, Jennie Linden as her sister Ursula, and naked wrestling Alan Bates and Oliver Reed as Birkin and Gerald. I should read the book instead (Followed by Weatherview) *(22455325). To 2.40am.*

ITV

6.00 **GMTV** *(2152672).*

9.25 **Children's ITV:** The Fantastic Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor *(1662769).* **9.55** London Today *(T) (7408011).* **10.00** Freakazoid! (S) *(16363).*

10.30 Film **D.A.R.Y.L** (Simon Wincer 1985 US). Childless couple adopt a young *boy who turns out to be a highly sophisticated robot (S) (T) (97990301).*

12.20 **Your Shout** *(9899092).* **12.30** News; Weather *(5703214).* **12.55** Local News *(2840924).* **1.30** Cartoon *(17848498).*

1.40 Film **Joe versus the Volcano** (John Patrick Shanley 1990 US) *Terminally-ill clerical worker Tom Hanks agrees to throw himself in the volcano on a Polynesian island (thus appeasing the gods) in return for 20 days of doing what he wants, financed by eccentric millionaire Lloyd Bridges.* An enjoyable enough shaggy dog story with Meg Ryan playing three very different women *(S) (T) (51023479)*

3.30 **News Headlines** *(T) (2547769).* **3.40** London Today *(T) (8695059).*

3.45 Film **Three Amigos!** (John Landis 1986 US). *Charmless, unfunny attempt at updating The Three Stooges,* with Chevy Chase, Steve Martin and Martin Short as three silent movie cowboys mistaken for the real thing when they go to Mexico *(T) (296721).*

5.40 **News; Weather** *(T) (657479).*

6.00 **London Tonight** *(T) (721).*

6.30 **London Bridge** *(S) (301).*

7.00 **Emmerdale** (S) *(T) (2160).*

7.30 **First Edition** *(S) (585).*

8.00 **Police, Camera, Action!** *(8108).*

8.30 **The Bill** *(T) (2653).*

9.00 **McCallum.** Return of the medical thriller series starring John Hannah as a forensic pathologist. In this opener he comes to the aid of a colleague ac*cused of causing the death of an old* man by reckless driving *(S) (T) (7189).*

10.00 **King Leek.** One-off comedy-drama from *Common As Muck* writer William Ivory. Tim Healey and Su Elliott star in *this tale of love and competitive leek* growing in the North East *(T) (9995).*

11.00 **News; Weather** *(T) (412081).*

11.15 **London Tonight** *(T) (300769).*

11.25 Film **Unlawful Entry** (Jonathan Kaplan 1992 US). Psychotic LA cop Ray Liotta investigates a burglary at the home of well-to-do Kurt Russell and Madeleine Stowe and then starts terrorising them. A quite exciting take on the politics of envy which runs out of steam half-way through *(S) (T) (791498).*

1.25 **Collins and Maconie's Movie Club** *(S) (4010122).*

1.55 Film **The Satan Bug** (John Sturges 1965 US) Sluggish Alastair MacLean adaptation with barking scientist Richard Basehart going AWOL with a vial of deadly virus *(46617141).*

4.00 Film **The Breaking Point** (Lance Comfort 1961 UK) A printer helps some Communists stop a shipment of foreign currency destined for a Middle Eastern state. Or something like that. I shouldn't worry about it *(61685)*

5.00 **Nationwide Football League Extra** *(R) (4270493).* **5.55** News *(7782035) To 6.00am.*

CHANNEL 4

6.00 **Sesame Street** *(S) (62127).* **7.00** The Babysitters' Club *(R) (9916450).* **7.35** Two Stupid Dogs *(R) (S) (8221214).* **8.00** The Bigger Breakfast *(S) (11818).* **10.00** Happy Days *(R) (9643653).* **10.35** Saved by the Bell: Wedding in Las Vegas *(R) (S) (T) (1167450).* **11.05** Moesha *(R) (S) (8287108)* **11.30** The Monkees *(8286363).* **12.05** Coping with... *(S) (3097011).* **12.35** Eerie, Indiana *(R) (T) (5700127)* **1.00** The Entertainers *(R) (S) (T) (18634).* **2.00** A Woman of Substance *(R) (T) (9130).* **4.00** Bewitched *(214).* **4.30** Countdown *(T) (2086363).*

4.55 **Ricki Lake.** Today's guest thinks she is being haunted by her late mother *(S) (T) (5472189).*

5.30 Film **Dr Who and the Daleks** (Gordon Flemyng 1965 UK). *Not as* much fun as the following year's *Daleks – Invasion Earth,* this first spin-off of the BBC series has the Doctor (played by Peter Cushing; too severe in the part) transported to a mysterious planet suffering the usual grief from *the voice-synthesised wheely-bins.* Roy Castle and Jennie Linden are his young assistants *(S) (86276).*

7.00 **News; Weather** *(T) (3030).*

7.30 **Interview with a Zombie.** Repeat *Encounters documentary in which anthropologist* Roland Littlewood travels deep into the Haitian countryside to discover the truth behind the zombie myth *(R) (S) (T) (75672).*

8.30 **Brookside.** Barry grief *(S) (T) (8585).*

9.00 **Mr White Goes to Westminster.** See *Today's Pick*, above *(S) (T) (9818).*

10.30 **And Finally... Rory Bremner.** And Trevor McDonald gets the chance to *present the News at Ten* as an all-singing, all-dancing entertainment *show (74108).*

11.30 **Smash It Up!** David Baddiel presents a documentary about some of the people who have been caught up in popular protests over issues like live *animal exports, the poll tax and the* building of new roads *(S) (T) (415160).*

12.20 Film **Cronos** (Guillermo del Toro *1992 Mex).* Impressive offshoot of the vampire movie, with ageing antiques *dealer Federico Luppi discovering a* device which contains the secret to eternal life – but at a price: the old man also develops a craving for human blood. Can he hold on to his hu*manity* – and those that he loves, even though he's beginning to make *Nosferatu look* like Tom Cruise? Intriguing and emotionally involving *(S) (990290).*

2.00 **Mission: Impossible.** Jim's mission, should he decide to accept it, takes place in Austria *(38561).*

3.00 Film **Brother Orchid** *(Lloyd Bacon* 1940 US). Edward G Robinson crime spoof with Robinson reclaiming his gangland empire after his right-hand man takes it over *(406238).*

4.35 Film **The Hatchet Man** *(William* Wellman 1932 US). Edward G Robinson again – this time as a Chinese assassin turned businessman lured back to his old ways by a gang war in San Francisco. *(9827325). To 6.00am.*

CHANNEL 5

6.00 **Dappledown Farm** *(R) (7685363).* **6.30** The Wind in the Willows *(24551568).* **6.50** Mr Men and Little Miss *(R) (30176301).* **7.00** Wimzie's House *(R) (9508081).* **7.30** Alvin and *the Chipmunks (8369238).* **8.00** Havakazoo *(R) (S) (3102045).* **8.30** Adventures of the Bush Patrol *(R) (S) (4552586).* **9.00** Stickin' Around *(R) (4543238).* **9.30** Wishbone *(R) (1156092).* **10.00** Enid Blyton · The Secret of Spiggy Holes *(S) (37583837).* **11.50** *Animal Xtremes (90534943).* **12.00** The Bold and the Beautiful *(T) (6521562).* **12.30** Family Affairs *(S) (T) (1167108).* **1.00** 5 News Update *(S) (88409498).* **1.05** Sunset Beach *(S) (T) (4743030).*

2.00 Film **Running Brave** (DS Everett 1983 US). Drama detailing the life story of champion runner Billy Mills, a *Sioux Indian who pursued Olympic* glory in the 1960s. Robby Benson (as in, whatever happened to Robby Benson?) stars *(4575363).*

3.55 Film **Holiday Affair** *(Don Hartman* 1949 US). Decentish seasonal fare with widow Janet Leigh, young son in tow, being courted by two very different men: Robert Mitchum and Wendell Corey *(9129721).*

5.30 **Whittle** *(S) (T) (4316672).*

6.00 **100 Per Cent** *(S) (4313585).*

6.30 ***Family Affairs.*** *Roy is sacked twice* in one day. But Tim and Holly are both playing it cool *(S) (T) (4304837).*

7.00 **Exclusive** *(S) (5765450).*

7.30 **Empire of the Elephant.** A look at the ostrich, rather oddly, given the title of the programme *(S) (T) (4393721).*

8.00 **Vanessa's Day with....** Neil and Christine Hamilton as they prepare to address the Oxford Union *(5781498).*

8.30 **5 News including First on Five** *(S) (T) (5760905).*

9.00 Film **Little Shop of Horrors** (Frank Oz 1986 US). Alas, not the 1961 Roger Corman cheapie, but the film version of the musical based on Corman's film. Big budget and bloated, there's a couple of decent tunes and some jazzy special effects – with *Rick Moranis as the florist with the* man-eating plant, Audrey II, in his basement *(32198856).*

10.50 **The Jack Docherty Show.** Another compilation, this time with Samantha Janus, Fred Macauley, Courtney Pine and Morrissey. *(S) (1228498).*

11.35 **Prisoner Cell Block H** *(9236837).*

12.30 Film **Too Young To Die?** (Robert Markowitz 1990 US). An abused teenager faces the gas chamber after murdering her boyfriend. Based on *real events, as if you needed telling,* but what might make you tune in is the presence of a young Juliette Lewis in the starring role, and a young Brad Pitt as a street hustler *(S) (4803219).*

2.20 Film **Little Dorrit – Little Dorrit's Story** (Christine 1987 UK). The second half of Christine Edzard's magnificent Dickens adaptation starring Alec Guinness, Derek Jacobi, Cyril Cusack, Joan Greenwood and, as Little Dorrit, Sarah Pickering *(37400509).*

5.25 **The Road** *(77412122). To 5.30am.*

VARIATIONS

Anglia

As Carlton except: 9.55 Anglia News and Weather *(7408011).* **12.20** Anglia News and Weather *(9899092).* **12.55** Millionaires *(2840924).* **3.40** Anglia News and Weather *(8695059).* **6.00** .. and Take This Bus to Cuba *(721).* **6.30** Anglia News *(301).* **7.30** Out to Lunch with Brian Turner *(585).* **11.15** Anglia News and Weather *(300769).* **1.55** Planet Mirth *(8640702).* **2.25** Danielle Steel's Fine Things *(98505290)*

Central

As Carlton except: 9.55 Central News *(7408011).* **12.20** Central News and Weather *(9899092).* **12.30** ITN News: Weather *(5703214).* **12.55** The Fashion Police *(2840924).* **3.40** Central News *(8695059).* **6.00** The Baldy Man *(721).* **6.30** Central News and Weather *(301).* **7.30** Motorway *(585).* **11.15** Central News and Weather *(300769).*

HTV Wales

As Carlton except: 9.55 HTV News *(7408011).* **12.20** HTV News *(9899092).* **12.55** Baywatch *(8012214).* **3.40** HTV News *(8695059).* **6.00** The Baldy Man *(491276).* **6.25** HTV Wales Weather *(300585).* **6.30** Wales Tonight *(301).* **7.30** Antiques Trail *(585).* **11.15** HTV News *(300769).* **1.55** Planet Mirth *(8640702).* **2.25** Danielle Steel's Fine Things *(98505290)*

HTV West

As HTV Wales except: 6.25 HTV West Weather *(300585).* **6.30** The West Tonight *(301).* **7.30** Secrets of the Levels *(585)* **11.15** *The West Tonight Update (300769).*

Meridian

As Carlton except: 9.55 Meridian News and Weather *(7408011).* **12.20** Meridian News and Weather *(9899092).* **12.55** Shortland Street *(2840924).* **3.40** Meridian News and Weather *(8695059).* **6.00** Meridian Tonight *(721).* **6.30** The Baldy Man *(301).* **7.30** Great Places of the South *(585).* **11.15** Meridian News and Weather *(300769).* **1.55** Planet Mirth *(8640702).* **2.25** Danielle Steel's Fine Things *(98505290).*

Westcountry

As Carlton except: 9.55 Westcountry News *(7408011).* **12.20** Westcountry News *(9899092).* **12.27** Illuminations *(9807011).* **12.55** Emmerdale *(2840924).* **3.40** Westcountry News *(8695059).* **6.00** Westcountry Live *(30856).* **7.30** Stirling Stuff *(585).* **11.15** Westcountry News *(300769).* **1.55** Planet Mirth *(8640702).* **2.25** Danielle Steel's Fine Things *(98505290).*

Yorkshire

As Carlton except: 9.55 Calendar News *(7408011).* **12.20** Calendar News and Weather *(9899092).* **12.55** Coronation Street *(2840924).* **3.40** Calendar News *(8695059).* **6.00** Calendar *(30856).* **7.30** The Baldy Man *(585)* **11.15** Calendar News and Weather *(300769).* **1.55** Film: The Day the Earth Caught Fire* *(878325).* **3.40** Film: Trading Hearts *(350986).* **5.15** Jobfinder *(7678306).*

Channel 3 North East

As Yorkshire except: 9.55 North East News and Weather *(7408011).* **12.20** North East News *(9899092).* **3.40** North East News and Weather *(8695059).* **5.40** News; Weather *(925382).* **5.55** North East Weather *(148672).* **6.00** North East Tonight *(30856).* **11.15** North East News *(300769).*

S4C

As Channel 4 except: 1.00 Slot Meithrin: Slei a Slac a Pingu *(53382).* **1.30** Boy Meets World *(12450).* **4.30** Countdown *(498).* **5.00** 5Pump: Uned 5 *(5693160).* **5.40** Cretyddau'r Byd Wedi Eu Hanimeiddio *(648721).* **6.00** Newyddion 6 *(864108).* **6.10** Heno *(240740).* **7.00** Pobol y Cwm *(512653).* **7.25** Cloriannau Llangollen *(5337843).* **8.30** Donau Donol Don *(8585).* **9.00** Cytgan yr Adar *(1022498).* **10.15** Newyddion *(502063).* **10.30** Brookside *(183452).* **11.05** And Finally... Rory Bremner *(474498).* **12.10** *Nobody Does it Better: the Music of James Bond (6209054).* **1.10** Smash It Up! *(9761238).* **1.55** Close.

RADIO

Radio 1

(97.6-99.8MHz FM)
8.00 Chris Moyles. **10.00** Mark Goodier. **12.30** Mary Anne Hobbs. **3.00** Clive Warren. **5.55** Newsbeat. **6.00** Radio 1's Dance Anthems - Dave Pearce. **9.00** Judge Jules. **12.00** Essential Mix: David Holmes. **2.00** Gilles Peterson. **5.00 - 8.00** Charlie Jordan.

Radio 2

88-90.2MHz FM)
6.00 Richard Allinson. **7.30** Sarah Kennedy. **9.30** Alex Lester. **11.30** Jimmy Young. **1.30** Debbie Thrower. **3.00** Ed Stewart. **5.05** John Dunn. **7.00** Richard Stilgoe's Classical Gas. **8.00** Nigel Ogden. **9.00** Rumpole and the Spirit of Christmas. **9.30** John Walters: Name Your Poison. **10.30** Radio 2's Hollywood Christmas. **11.00** Bob Harris. **1.00** Steve Madden. **3.00 - 4.00** Patrick Lunt.

Radio 3

90.2-92.4MHz FM)
.00 *On Air.*
.00 Morning Collection.
10.00 *Musical Encounters.*
12.00 Composers of the Week: *wentieth-Century American Song.*
1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. (R)
.00 The BBC Orchestras.
.00 Voices.
.45 Turns of the Century.
.00 The Changing Orchestra.
.30 Solti Resounding. (R)
.00 Performance on 3.
.15 Postscript. 2: 'Food'. Derek ooper, Marguerite Patten and Alan ong discuss how food has hanged during the century and how eir own *personal tastes have* hanged during their lives.
.35 *Vingt regards sur l'enfant Je- us.* Olivier Messiaen's epic cycle of 0 pieces is one of the *most striking* nd individual works ever conceived r the piano, an *extraordinary fusion* spirituality and keyboard virtuosity. anna MacGregor has won wide cclaim for her interpretation for this onumental score, and she also In- duces this specially recorded performance.
.00 The Shellac Show. In the urth of six programmes spinning rpm records, Jeremy Nicholas introduces listeners' requests for Elis- eth Schumann singing Bohm's ill we die Nacht' and Fritz eisler's piano performance of his n 'Liebesleid' with his cellist other Hugo.
.30 Composers of the Week: tish Light Music. *(R)*
.30 Jazz Notes.
0 - 6.00 *Through the Night.*

CHOICE

Gottle of Geer (10am R4 FM)
For some reason, ventriloquism has a long and illustrious history on radio. Quentin Cooper adds to the tradition with this documentary about the world's biggest ventriloquists' convention, at the Imperial Hotel, Las Vegas, including the Gospel Ventriloquist Evening Jamboree of Faith.

Radio 4

(92.4-94.6MHz FM)
6.00 News Briefing.
6.10 *Farming Today.*
6.25 Prayer for the Day.
6.30 Today.
8.45 Facts and Fancies.
8.58 Weather.
9.00 News.
9.05 Call Ed Stourton: (0171) 580 4444.
10.00 NEWS; Gottle of Geer. *See Choice, above*
10.30 Woman's Hour.
11.30 The Pickwick Papers.
12.00 NEWS; You and Yours.
12.25 *Random Edition.*
12.55 Weather.
1.00 *The World at One.*
1.40 The Archers.
1.55 *Shipping Forecast.*
2.00 NEWS; Thirty Minute Theatre: A Sense of History.
2.30 Literary Houses.
3.00 NEWS; The Afternoon Shift.
4.00 News.
4.05 *Kaleidoscope Quiz.*
4.45 Short Story: The Gift of the Magi. (R)
5.00 PM
5.50 Shipping Forecast.
5.55 Weather
6.00 Six O'Clock News.
6.30 North East of Eden (R)
7.00 News.
7.05 The Archers
7.20 Bismarck in a Cardigan. Helmut Kohl - visionary statesman or sinister threat to European liberties? *David Sells explores the motivation* behind one of the most formidable *of modern political leaders, following* Kohl's journey from terrified Hitler *Youth recruit to cosy embodiment of* postwar recovery (R)
8.00 Science Now. Is behaviour in the mind or all in the brain? Peter Evans reports from the annual meeting of the British Psychological Society
8.30 Costing the Earth. Roger Harrabin takes a personal journey through the Philippines, looking at the main environmental issues facing the country
9.00 In Touch. Peter White with news, views and information for visually impaired people
9.30 The Pickwick Papers. By Charles Dickens, dramatised in six parts by Martyn Read. 5: "Mr Pickwick *Goes to Prison".* In which Mr Pickwick is introduced to an unwel*come though not uninteresting* scene in the great drama of life. With Clive Francis and Bill Wallis
9.59 Weather.
10.00 The World Tonight
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Playback By Raymond Chandler
11.00 Mediumwave. The week's events in the media
11.30 An Artist in Sound (R)
12.00 News.
12.30 The Late Book. Ghost Stones
12.48 Shipping Forecast
1.00 As World Service
5.50 Inshore Forecast
5.55 - 6.00 Shipping Forecast

Radio 4 LW

(198kHz)
10.00 NEWS. Daily Service. **10.15 - 10.30** On This Day

Radio 5 Live

(693, 909kHz MW)
6.00 Murray Walker's GP World **6.30** The Breakfast Programme **9.00** Nicky Campbell **11.30** The Celtic Tiger. **12.00** Midday with Mair **2.00** Ruscoe on Five **4.00** Nationwide. **7.00** News Extra. **7.30** The Politician, the Actress and the Bishop **8.00** The Tuesday Match. **10.00** Off Piste **11.00** News **11.30** The Celtic Tiger **12.00** After Hours **2.00** Up All Night **5.00 - 6.00** Off Piste

Classic FM

(100.0-101.9MHz FM)
6.00 Alan Mann **9.00** Henry Kelly **1.00** Chart of 1895 **2.00** Concerto **3.00** Jamie Crick **6.00** Susannah Simons. **8.00** Evening Concert. **10.00** Margaret Howard **2.00** Concerto. **4.00 - 6.00** Mark Griffiths

Virgin Radio

(1215, 1197-1260kHzMW 105.8MHzFM)
6.00 Lynn Parsons **10.00** Robin Banks **1.00** Nicky Horne. **4.00** Mark Forrest **7.00** Carrie Jones. **10.00** Jeremy Clark. **2.00 - 6.00** Richard Porter

World Service

(198kHz LW)
1.00 *Newsdesk* **1.30** Discovery **2.00** Newsday **2.30** Meridian **3.00** World News **3.05** World Business Report **3.15** Sports Roundup **3.30** One Planet **4.00** Newsdesk **4.30** Europe Today/The World Today (LW SW 5875kHz) **4.45** Off the Shelf High Spirits **5.00** Newsdesk **5.30** Europe Today/Outlook (SW 7150kHz only). **5.55 - 6.00** Take Five (SW 7150kHz only)

SATELLITE/CABLE

Sky Movies Screen 1

6.00 Kansas (1995) *(34837)* **7.30** The Secret Invasion (1964) *(98450).* **9.30** A Little Princess (1995) *(61721).* **11.30** Picnic at Hanging Rock (1975) *(27853)* **1.30** Bed of Roses (1996) *(18214)* **3.00** Little Bigfoot 2: the Journey Home (1996) *(84011).* **5.00** A Little Princess (1995) *(21634).* **7.00** Bed of Roses (1996) *(98479).* **9.00** Heaven's Prisoners (1996) *(85348011).* **11.15** Lurking Fear (1994) *(586672).* **12.35** Heavy (1995) *(238122)* **2.20** Poison Ivy II: Lily (1995) *(673528).* **4.10 - 6.00** Kansas (1995) *(419238).*

Sky Movies Screen 2

6.00 Hollywood Cavalcade (1939) *(38818)* **8.00** Snow White and the Three Stooges (1961) *(59092)* **10.00** A Place in the World (1992) *(77301).* **12.00** Here Comes Mr Jordan (1941) *(72343)* **2.00** The Duellists (1977) *(14856)* **4.00** Young Indiana Jones: Travels with Father (1996) *(7011).* **6.00** Invisible Mom (1995) *(24479).* **7.30** Special Feature - the Year in Review *(3301).* **8.00** Where's the Money, Noreen? (1995) *(34027).* **10.00** Get Shorty (1995) *(718030).* **11.45** Bad Boys (1995) See Choice, above *(654653)* **1.40** Someone to Die For (1995) *(682615)* **3.20** China Girl (1987) *(538108).* **4.55 - 6.00** Sherlock Holmes, a Study in Scarlet (1984) *(4878306)*

Sky Movies Gold

4.00 Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger (1977) *(9352127)* **6.00** Major League (1989) *(4594634)* **8.00** Hard Times (1975) *(4506479)* **10.00** Heartbreak Ridge (1986) *(80900011).* **12.10** Fright Night II (1988) *(1711054).* **1.55** Les Yeux sans Visage* (1959) *(24892054).* **3.25** Hard Times (1975) *(25795073)* **4.55** Close.

Bravo

8.00 The A-Team *(4483547).* **9.00** *Tour of Duty (4496011).* **10.00** Red Shoe Diaries *(5595856)* **10.45 Film:** COD (1981) *(9470943).* **12.45** Tour of Duty *(1899493).* **1.45** Red Shoe Diaries *(5998325)* **2.30 Film:** Cooley High (1975) *(2432122)* **4.30** Family Dog *(2285503)* **5.00 - 6.00** Starsky and Hutch *(4000325)*

Discovery Channel

4.00 Bush Tucker Man *(3490189)* **4.30** Flightline *(3412301)* **5.00** Best of British *(8626566).* **6.00** The World of Sharks and Barracudas *(9954011)* **7.00** Arthur C Clarke's *Mysterious World (6627295)* **7.30** Disaster *(3413030)* **8.00** Titanic *(4489721)* **9.00** Titanic *(4409585)* **10.00** Titanic *(1441011)* **12.00** Best of British *(3504677)* **1.00** Disaster *(3835342)* **1.30** Beyond 2000 *(9488219)* **2.00** Close.

CHOICE

Bad Boys (11.45pm Sky Movies Screen 2)
Thanks to *Men in Black* (and its hit single), Will Smith is one of Hollywood's hottest properties. This comedy thriller from an earlier vintage showcases his screen presence. He teams up with Martin Lawrence to play a pair of street-smart cops on the trail of stolen heroin.

Sky 1

6.00 *Morning Glory (566295).* **8.00** Hotel *(13560).* **10.00** Another World *(91566).* **11.00** Days of Our Lives *(53130).* **12.00** Oprah Winfrey *(54450).* **1.00** Geraldo *(70498).* **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael *(77498).* **3.00** Jenny Jones *(70924)* **4.00** Oprah Winfrey *(99059).* **5.00** Star Trek: Voyager *(1837).* **6.00** Dream Team *(7127).* **6.30** Married with Children *(8479).* **7.00** The Simpsons *(2566).* **7.30** Real TV *(7363).* **8.00** Rescue Paramedics *(1214).* **8.30** Coppers *(4491).* **9.00** *World's Funniest Wedding Disasters (99547).* **10.00** Extraordinary *(92634).* **11.00** *Star Trek: Voyager (92295).* **12.00** Late Show *(55290).* **1.00** Heat *of the Night (48073).* **2.00 - 6.00** Long Play *(6633702).*

Sky Sports 1

7.00 Sports Centre *(21721).* **7.30** *Football League Review (40856).* **8.00** V-Max *(42740).* **8.30** Sports Centre *(41011).* **9.00** Racing News *(32363).* **9.30** Aerobics *(78653).* **10.00** NHL Ice Hockey *(65189).* **12.00** Aerobics *(52127)* **12.30** Football *(38189).* **2.30** Ice Hockey *(52672).* **4.30** V-Max *(1108).* **5.00** WWF Live Wire *(9011).* **6.00** Sports Centre *(5301).* **6.30** Tartan Extra *(6653).* **7.00** Figure Skating *(41585).* **9.00** Footballers' Football Show *(53769).* **10.00** Sports Centre *(53856).* **10.30** Tartan Extra *(39276).* **11.00** *Pro Beach Soccer (47769).* **12.00** Sports Centre *(94528)* **12.30** *Footballers' Football Show (56615).* **1.30** Tartan Extra *(50344).* **2.00** Pro Beach Soccer *(39509).* **3.00** Sports Centre *(24431).* **3.30** Close.

Sky Sports 2

7.30 Sky Sports Centre *(9289721).* **8.00** *Racing News (5022276).* **8.30** Fish TV *(5021547).* **9.00** Fish TV *(5045127).* **9.30** Football League Review *(7005924).* **10.00** World Motor Sport *(3819189).* **1.00** Darts *(4618160).* **5.00** Pro Beach Soccer *(2605382).* **6.00** Sports Unlimited *(7024059).* **7.00** Sports Centre *(2606011).* **7.30** Darts Pairs World Championships *(2591769).* **11.30** Extreme Sport *(6911740)* **12.00** Sports Unlimited *(4634412).* **1.00** Sky Sports Centre *(9275141).* **1.30** NHL Ice Hockey *(4635141)* **3.30** Close.

Sky Sports 3

12.00 International Cricket Australia v South Africa *(38071450).* **4.00** Super League Classics Wigan v Bradford *(54690924).* **5.30** *Survival of the Fittest (28260547).* **8.00** International *Cricket Australia v South Africa (50577214).* **10.00** Superbouts Ali v Spinks *(56275547).* **11.00** Olympics Series *(35200030).* **11.30** Close.

Eurosport

7.30 Olympic Magazine *(35924).* **8.00** *Athletics (71504).* **10.00** *Alpine Skiing (31108).* **11.00** Football *(86301).* **12.30** Fun Sports *(74837).* **1.00** Ski Jumping *(97276).* **3.00** Trickshot *(39585).* **5.00** Strength *(1479).* **6.00** Motorcycling *(82856).* **7.00** Football: Eurocups Special *(36653).* **8.00** Boxing *(48637).* **10.00** Football *(41924).* **11.00** Triathlon *(18189)* **12.30** Close.

UK Gold

7.00 Bullseye *(4937295).* **7.35** Neighbours *(4713160).* **8.00** Crossroads *(2895769).* **8.25** EastEnders *(6435634).* **9.00** The Bill *(6634092)* **9.30** Howards' Way *(9944634).* **10.00** Bless This House *(1012295).* **10.30** The Sullivans *(6630276).* **11.00** Boon *(8669382).* **12.00** *Crossroads (46721127).* **12.25** Neighbours *(46724214).* **12.55** EastEnders *(2655924).* **1.30** Hi-De-Hi *(15196721)* **2.40** The Les Dawson Show *(3344498).* **3.30** The Bill *(3406740).* **4.00** Juliet Bravo *(38245837).* **5.05** EastEnders *(1709127).* **5.40** Only Fools and Horses *(29647943).* **7.25** The Liver Birds *(4750498).* **8.20** 2point4 Children *(2840063).* **9.00** Dad's Army *(2583653)* **9.40** Spender *(66895721)* **10.50** French and Saunders *(5182740).* **11.30** Canned Carrott *(1936382).* **12.10** Larry Grayson's Generation Game *(3062035).* **1.10** Chancer *(2841967).* **2.05** Miami Vice *(8370948).* **2.50 - 7.00** Shopping at *Night (24909344).*

Living

6.00 *Tiny Living (7708112).* **8.00** Entertainment Now! *(9284566).* **9.15** Hart *to Hart (9753363).* **10.10** Jerry Springer Uncut *(9723672).* **11.00** The *Young and the Restless (7533108).* **11.55** Brookside *(49746585).* **12.25** Jimmy's *(7806547).* **1.00** Cheap Chic *(6926498).* **1.30** Tempest *(2172189)* **2.20** Ready Steady Cook *(7200634).* **3.00** Could It Be a Miracle? *(95179011).* **4.10** The Jerry Springer Show *(4813653).* **5.00** Rolonda *(4325127).* **5.50** Cheap Chic *(3381450).* **6.20** Ready, Steady, Cook *(1546634).* **7.00** Rescue 911 *(9331634).* **7.30** Mysteries, Magic and Miracles *(7351160)* **8.00** Jerry Springer Uncut *(4593905).* **9.00 Film:** Escape from Terror: the Teresa Stamper Story (1994) *(4596092).* **11.00** The Sex Zone *(6903547).* **12.00** Close.

Live TV

6.00 Living Room Legends **6.30** Agony **7.00** Dial-a-Doc **7.15** Nation LIVE **7.30** Fashion Show **8.00** Agony **8.30** Living Room Legends **9.00** Love Story **9.15** Nation LIVE **9.30** Why Files? **10.00** Lie Detector **10.30** Dial-a-Doc **10.45** Love Story **11.00** Revelations **11.30** Fate and Fortune **12.00** Why Files? **12.30** Revelations **1.00** Lie Detector **1.30** Agony **2.00** Fashion Show **2.30** Revelations **3.00** Fate and Fortune **3.30** Dial-a-Doc **4.00** *Living Room Legends* **4.30** Fashion Show **5.00** Agony **5.30** Lie Detector **6.00** Living Room Legends **6.30** Sport Live **7.00** The Fashion Show **7.30** Agony **8.00** Lie Detector **8.30** Living Room Legends **9.00** Why Files? **9.30** Fashion Show **10.00** Topless Darts; Sport Live **10.30** Agony **11.00** Topless Darts; Sex Show **11.30** *Exotica Erotica* **12.30** *Pleasure Dome* **1.00** Private Dancer **1.30** Fashion *Show* **2.00** Sex Show **2.30** Exotica Erotica **3.30** Agony **4.00** Sex Show **4.30** Sports Live **5.00** Why Files? **5.30 - 6.00** Home Shopping

Numbers in brackets are VideoPlus+® Codes
(T) = Teletext Subtitles (S) = Stereo

TV Guide by Gerard Gilbert

Atherton named one-day captain as selectors favour tradition over innovation

With one-day cricket having become a different game to its longer and increasingly more distant cousin, the practice of having two different teams, with possibly two different captains, is becoming widespread.

***Derek Pringle* finds the England selectors only in partial agreement as they announce both the one-day squad and captain for the Caribbean.**

The England selectors, sticking to the time-honoured tradition of having one captain for both Test and one-day teams, have confirmed that Michael Atherton, already in charge of the forthcoming Test series, will remain as England's one-day captain for the West Indies.

Considering the bold steps taken in Sharjah under Adam Hollioake, where England won the Champions Trophy, the announcement came as something of a surprise, not least to Hollioake, who must settle for vice-captain instead.

It all looked very different before Christmas, and having opted to rest during Sharjah, Atherton was widely thought to have paved the way for Hollioake – who in his absence not only stepped into the breach, but out of the other side with a trophy too.

Indeed for many, the triumph of Sharjah made it almost a foregone conclusion, albeit one that needed to be rubber-stamped by the other selectors. Graham Gooch and Mike Gatting, now both departed on England A's tour to Kenya and Sri Lanka.

Clearly they felt differently, though the chairman, David Graveney, announced, after the three had got together yesterday at Gatwick, that it had been a unanimous decision.

"Michael's last captaincy involvement of a one-day squad was the 3-0 win over Australia," Graveney said. "So we are very fortunate to have two outstanding candidates to be captain of the one-day team.

"A priority is to win the Test series in the West Indies, but we have identified the path we want to take in terms of one-day cricket leading up to the World Cup."

For Atherton, a man on the cusp of resigning as England captain only a matter of months ago, the decision must have been a gratifying one. In its attempts to modernise, English cricket has not overlooked its loyalties and while Atherton has been far from faultless as captain, there is no doubt he has given the job everything.

Although he is still on holiday in Jamaica, Atherton has been in touch with Graveney. But while he will have seen Hollioake's star in the ascendant during Sharjah, he will no doubt have reminded the chairman of selectors of his century in the second one-day match against Australia last season.

"I've always said I was keen to play one-day internationals for England, and that remains the case," he said from his hotel in Montego Bay. "I'm happy to be captaining the one-day squad, which will reflect the success of the team in Sharjah while providing space for competition for those in the West Indies.

"I'm looking forward to working with Adam," he added. "He did an outstanding job in Sharjah, and that's been reflected by his promotion to vice-captain. All of us in the West Indies will be keen to find out how things worked in Sharjah and look to continue that momentum."

For Hollioake, the promise of an exciting Christmas present has, like Santa Claus, disappeared into the ether. Having captained with distinction, Hollioake could perhaps have done with one or two more telling performances to convince the selectors of his certainty in selection. These days captains cannot be carried.

However, if he is disappointed, he hid it well. "It was obviously a difficult decision for the selectors," the Surrey captain said, "but I'm delighted to have been made vice-captain for the one-dayers. Mike was unavailable for Sharjah but in the last series he was captain against Australia: we won 3-0 and he was man of the series."

For many, Hollioake's 100 per cent record in the Gulf could not be faulted. Yet as Atherton will no doubt pass on to him during the forthcoming tour of the Caribbean, the truest measure of a captain is not so much how you perform when you are winning, but how you go about getting your team back upright when they have been on their knees. So far only Atherton has been there.

Reiffel rules, page 27

Confusion reigns over whether Gross will stay or go

The future of the Spurs manager, Christian Gross, was thrown into doubt yesterday when the Department of Employment rejected the club's application for a work permit for the fitness co-ordinator Fritz Schmid.

***Matt Tench* reports.**

Ever since he arrived on the tube for his inaugural press conference, Christian Gross's appointment has carried with it the promise of bringing something different to English football. Now it looks as though he might be very different; the first manager to walk out on a club because of a fitness instructor.

Gross's failure at the weekend to deny suggestions that he would leave Spurs if Fritz Schmid was not granted a work permit raised a few eyebrows and added a further layer of uncertainty to a managerial situation already rich in rumour and intrigue. Yesterday's decision to turn down Schmid's application simply makes the situation worse. To confuse matters still further, Tottenham last night issued a statement which contradicted Gross's version of events, and hinted at a growing split between club and manager, while Gross insisted he was happy to stay with the club.

Gross has worked with Schmid for four years and sets great store by his knowledge of sports medicine and injury rehabilitation – talents that Spurs, who have been plagued by injuries, need more than most. However Schmid, like Gross, is Swiss and because Switzerland is not a member of the European Union he can only work in Britain with a permit.

A DOE spokesman explained the decision by saying: "In these cases we ask, 'Are they uniquely qualified to such an extent that they can bring skills and talents to the game that are not available in the UK?' We also ask, 'Have they got an established international reputation?' On the basis of the information we have at the moment Schmid hasn't met those criteria."

Spurs have lodged an appeal, and as Liverpool discovered recently with Brad Friedel, such appeals can succeed. "If Spurs come up with information that clarifies the situation we'll look at it as quickly as we can," the spokesman added. "Appeals can take a couple of weeks, or less."

Should the appeal fail, it seems very likely that Gross will depart. Speaking after Sunday's north London derby, he said: "When I signed my contract, it was on the condition that I could bring Fritz with me. He [Schmid] is a Fifa-qualified fitness trainer and the first non-Italian to get their special diploma. But if you are asking if I'll go if he doesn't get it, I cannot answer you. I just cannot say."

However, the club issued a statement last night which said: "Tottenham Hotspur wish to make it perfectly clear that there is no clause in Christian Gross's contract regarding the employment of another person. The terms of his employment have never been conditional upon the employment of anybody else." One suggestion is that Gross is in any case being lined as the new Swiss national team coach. But last night Gross said: "This is all speculation. There is no question of me taking charge of the Swiss national side. I am committed to Spurs and pleased to be here. I will do the job to the best of my ability."

Even before these latest twists there had been hints that his tenure, which began in late November, might not be a long one. Despite beginning with a win at Everton, Gross's impact has been mixed, with heavy defeats by Chelsea, Coventry and Aston Villa pointing up a porous defence and an unbalanced squad.

Were he to leave there would be no shortage of candidates for his post. The arrival of Jürgen Klinsmann last week was seen by some Spurs fans as providing an ideal replacement, someone whose charisma and playing record might reproduce in N17 the talismanic effect Ruud Gullit has had at Chelsea. An alternative, at least in the short term, would be to change David Pleat's job description. Pleat is due to become Tottenham's director of football in mid-January, but would surely need little persuading to become the full-time manager, a post he held for one fondly remembered season in the late Eighties.

A third name frequently associated with Spurs is that of Joe Kinnear, the much-respected Wimbledon manager. Kinnear has been fiercely loyal to the south London club but is thought to have been unsettled in his position by the change in ownership at his club, and in particular by reports that his new Norwegian bosses, Bjorn Rune Gjelsten and Kjell Inge Rokke, are contemplating bringing in the Norwegian national coach, Egil Olsen, after the World Cup.

Fritz Schmid (right) appeared alongside the Spurs chairman, Alan Sugar, when Christian Gross (left) was unveiled as Spurs' coach Photograph: Allsport

Coppell tips Blackburn to run United close

Steve Coppell believes Blackburn Rovers have the best chance of catching Manchester United in the Premiership title race. The Crystal Palace manager thinks Rovers, more than any of the other contenders, can mount a serious challenge to his former club because of the quality of their squad.

Coppell claimed he was not that shocked when United lost at Coventry and believes they could be hampered in the new year by fixture congestion as they chase trophies on three fronts.

"Blackburn are a realistic possibility given the quality and depth of their squad," he said. "You can say they more than anyone else have the best chance of pushing United all the way to the wire. Blackburn can play badly and still pick up points, which is a good sign.

"When games come thick and fast, that's when surprise results like United's defeat at Coventry happen. With all the internationals and European Cup matches coming up, that's the only way I can see Manchester United losing it."

Coppell claimed he is not too surprised by Rovers' transformation from candidates for the drop to contenders for the top under Roy Hodgson, but he admitted he had not expected Hodgson, with his European coaching background, to use a 4-4-2 formation with wingers.

"All credit to Blackburn – they are the surprise side of the season," Coppell said. "Everyone expected an improvement under Roy but nobody expected them to be as 'English' a side as they are."

Much has been made of Chris Sutton's form this season but Coppell picked out Kevin Gallacher as his key man for Rovers. Gallacher took his goals tally for the campaign to 11 against Palace in their 2-2 draw at Ewood Park and Coppell felt he was outstanding.

"I think Blackburn's catalyst has been Kevin Gallacher," he said. "Chris Sutton's obviously a top-quality striker but Gallacher drops off so well and I feel he's the one who makes things happen. We tried to go tight on him, but given the quality of his play he still got strikes on goal and scored."

Damien Duff's fame has already spread to south London but Coppell prefers Jason Wilcox, who has lost his place to the teenage Irishman. "I know all about Damien Duff and what he can do, but I personally like Jason Wilcox as he never lets you down," he said. "Duff has more subtlety about his play but that is allied with inexperience. In matches, that can count against you, but Wilcox has experience."

Milan's Liberian striker, George Weah, will have to have surgery on a spinal disc injury and is expected to be out of action for at least two months. He last played a *Serie A* match for Milan against Bari on 7 December. He has scored only three goals in 11 games this season, often complaining of back pains.

The French international midfielder Christian Karembeu moved a step closer to joining Real Madrid yesterday, according to reports on Spanish state television. TVE, which said Real's president, Lorenzo Sanz, met his Sampdoria counterpart, Enrico Mantovani, for negotiations.

The two clubs teams are believed to have reached an agreement after several months of negotiations, with Real paying a £2m for the Frenchman.

Speed is of the essence for eager Dalglish

Kenny Dalglish is making a new attempt to take the Everton captain, Gary Speed, to Newcastle United. Dalglish is now willing to pay £4.5m for Speed, a £500,000 increase on his previous offer, but he wants the deal done swiftly.

Speed is hoping to be fit for the weekend when he is scheduled to return to the Everton side against Newcastle in the third round of the FA Cup. However, Dalglish would rather Speed was not Cup-tied as Newcastle's best chance of success in a disappointing season could be in that competition.

Liverpool are pursuing the Leicester centre-back Matt Elliott. The Scottish international cost Leicester £1.7m when he joined them from Oxford United last year

Aljosa Asanovic has left Derby County and signed a two and a half year contract with the Italian side Napoli.

– Alan Nixon

RUGBY UNION

Newcastle's title credentials on the line as they enter Leicester's lair

It is the kind of rugby match that the men with the big pockets dream would happen every week – a guaranteed full-house fixture with the added frisson of old kings of the hill facing the pretenders.

The financial problems affecting the game will be temporarily forgotten as Newcastle enter the heartland of rugby at Welford Road tonight where Leicester's Tigers have been sharpening their claws ever since they ended Saracens' unbeaten record in the Allied Dunbar Premiership on Boxing Day.

The northern upstarts settled into Saracens' top spot with a thumping 50-8 win at Bristol on Saturday but third-placed Leicester are intent on knocking them down a peg or two.

Rob Andrew, Newcastle's rugby director, concedes that a win would impress the rest of the Premiership.

"It is the biggest test of our championship credentials so far," he said. "If we win we can face any challenge with increased confidence.

"But we have not even played one third of our Premiership fixtures. We have given ourselves no more than a solid platform. The league is not won here. It will be won in April or May, and we want to be still at the top when the music stops."

Two of the side who beat Saracens will not be on the Leicester song-sheet. Graham Rowntree and Leon Lloyd have not recovered from arm and shoulder injuries respectively, so Perry Freshwater comes in at prop and Craig Joiner takes over on the left wing.

For Newcastle, the full-back Tim Stimpson and Tony Underwood are back from injuries, and the wing John Bentley, recently out of favour, is also be available for selection.

Bath are also determined to put a newly promoted rich club in their place, although they are still below half-way and six points adrift of Newcastle.

As he prepared his team to host Northampton, the Bath coach, Andy Robinson, said: "We have got to win a run of three league games – against Sale, Northampton and Richmond – and we started well with the win at Sale on Saturday.

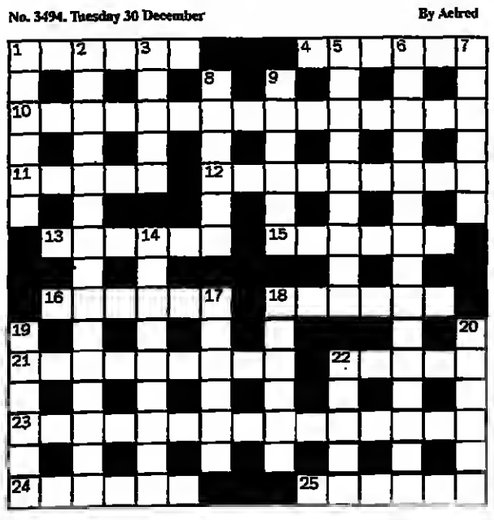
"Again we ground out a narrow success, and that was reminiscent of the old Bath. But we have not hit top gear yet and are looking for a bit of style as we build towards the European Cup final."

Bath face a kicker in supreme form in Northampton's Paul Grayson. His goals have brought him 68 points out of 93 and Bath know that if they are in one of their penalty-conceding modes they will suffer.

Saracens, who expect to get back on track at lowly London Irish, rest lock Paddy Johns and bring in another international in Wales' Tony Copsey. Irish changes may be confined to a slight tinkering with their starting line-up.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3494. Tuesday 30 December — By Aelred



Monday's Solution

ACROSS

1 Rate a silly female? (6)
4 One produces picture of a person writing a cheque? (6)
10 Bringing up firstborn, say, means producing nice atmosphere (3-12)
11 Make one a poem in upper-class New York (5)
12 Don't use enough shorts? (9)
13 Carriage in which tea is ecstasy (6)
15 Cut off company backing sect (6)
16 Notes appearance to be humble (6)
18 Book of teeth? (6)
21 A bringer of first indication of hereafter possibly? (9)
22 Awfully cruel, usually described as filthy (5)
23 The item perhaps which editors write (7,8)
24 Finish brief description of present participles? (6)
25 Compound pain with an addition (6)

DOWN

1 You can count on this electricity supply in a PSV (6)
2 As the crow flies to electoral division it's simple (15)
3 Coy about old women being flamboyant (5)
5 They could be for sack or something else on top of car? (4-5)
6 In royalist's descent to dungeons these ward off infection (5,5,5)
7 About to pull up and look (6)
8 Cite formula to make red become lower(6)
9 Workplace could be tedious with loss of energy (6)
14 Lassitude found in a fool one's taken on (9)
17 Take on a person almost ready to be married (6)
18 Slogan showing one's cautious about credit (3,3)
19 Incline to postpone from consideration (6)
20 Flies to America for material thrown overboard (6)
22 Non-clerics accepting a kiss would show permissiveness (5)

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